

Completing an Activity Risk Assessment



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Aligned with the Sheffield Methodist District

September 2025

The following guidance is intended to support all those involved in providing and running church-organised activities for vulnerable groups — children, young people, or vulnerable adults. It does not apply to lettings or external groups.

The guidance is divided into Four parts, which can be used either together or separately. Only **Part B** or **D** requires action — **Parts A and C** are for information only.

Each group must keep a copy of Part C with them during every session

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Part A

Methodist Context

Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church in Britain – June 2023: *page 61*

While the Church recognises that it is not possible to avoid all risk when working with vulnerable groups, it is possible to try and minimise those risks. This can be achieved through careful planning and preparation and by providing a written record of the thought processes and action taken. Activity risk assessments should be undertaken before any activity takes place, approved by the event leader/minister and retained securely in case they need to be seen at a later date (e.g. as a result of an accident taking place).

Activity risk assessments should include, but is not limited to:

- the nature of the activity
- the location
- transport needed and associated issues (e.g. insurance)
- staffing levels/gender
- experience of staff
- ages of the group attending, abilities, special needs
- medical and health needs of the group/individuals within it
- emergency planning
- identified risks
- action(s) needed to address the risk and by whom.

Taken from the Model Church Safeguarding Policy – July 2023: *page 4*

a) Good practice

We believe that good practice means:

v) Activity risk assessments will be undertaken before any activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved. Approval will be obtained from the event leader/minister. A written record of the assessment will be retained securely.

Taken from the Model Circuit Safeguarding Policy – August 2024: *page 4*

The circuit meeting holds the following responsibilities, which may be delegated to the Circuit Safeguarding Officer, if appropriate:

- Receiving and reviewing church risk assessments and training schedules for each church in the circuit and sharing with the circuit meeting annually.

Information for Group Leaders

You should complete an activity risk assessment when starting a new group / activity or moving to a new venue.

It's important to remember that responsibility for the building's overall safety lies with the people who manage it—not with you. The church council or property group should be happy to answer any questions you may have.

You should review your activity risk assessment annually and update it as necessary. Consider any risks that might affect volunteers, guests, visitors etc.

The following template (Part B) outlines a wide range of potential risks, designed to cover as many church outreach groups as possible. These include areas addressed in the **Safeguarding Policies, Procedures, and Guidance**.

Not all listed risks will apply to your group. Please copy and paste the relevant ones to create your own tailored assessment, or mark any that are not applicable as **N/A**. If you identify a risk not already listed, feel free to add a new line to include it.

All completed activity risk assessments should be submitted to your **Church Safeguarding Officer**, who will present them to the **Church Council** as part of their report. Securing the council's approval not only helps share responsibility but also provides you with protection in the event of an incident.

Throughout this document, the term 'guests' refers to the group of people your activity is aimed at. For example:

- If you are running a dementia café, the guests are the people with dementia and their carers/family.
- If you are running a Parent and Toddler group, the guests are the children and their parents/carers.

If you have been running the group for a long time and do not plan to complete the full Activity Risk Assessment (Part B), please complete the Activity Checklist (Part D) instead. While completing the checklist, if you answer 'no' to any question, refer to the corresponding question in Part B for guidance on how to manage the risk.

The checklist needs to be signed off by the Minister / Deacon / Lay Pastor and then a copy given to the Church Safeguarding Officer to share with the Church Council.

If you haven't completed an Activity Risk Assessment before, the following page may be helpful. Writing a thorough assessment ensures that all potential hazards are identified and addressed, helping to protect staff, volunteers, and visitors.

Steps for Writing an Activity Risk Assessment
Step 1: Review the guidelines for setting up a group aimed at vulnerable people:
If you are planning a group aimed at children or young people, read <i>Working with Children and Young People – A Safeguarding Guide for Group Leaders and Volunteers</i>. If your group includes vulnerable adults, read <i>Working with Adults – A Safeguarding Guide for Group Leaders and Volunteers</i>. (Click here to access the guidance online)
Step 2: Consult with Others
Speak with staff, volunteers, and regular attendees. They may notice hazards you've overlooked or recall near-miss incidents that highlight hidden risks.
Step 3: Review Past Incidents
Take time to review previous activities and any problems that occurred. Even minor incidents can provide valuable insights into potential future risks.
Step 4: Consider Special Activities
Think about all the different activities that take place in your group—especially those that involve unique or elevated risks.
Step 5: Decide on Control Measures
Control measures can range from simple fixes, like removing a tripping hazard, to more significant changes. The goal is to eliminate or reduce risks as much as possible.
Step 6: Record Your Findings
Clearly document your findings in the activity risk assessment. Ensure the document is easy to understand and accessible to all staff and volunteers.
Step 7: Implement Control Measures
Put your plan into action. Assign specific tasks and responsibilities, and make sure everyone understands what is expected of them.
Step 8: Monitor and Review Regularly
A risk assessment is not a one-time task. Review it regularly—especially if there are changes to the building, new activities introduced, or following any incidents.
Step 9: Communicate with Everyone Involved
Make sure all leaders and volunteers are aware of the risks and the measures in place. Encourage open communication and feedback to identify and address new hazards promptly.
Step 10: Keep Detailed Records
Maintain comprehensive records. These should include copies of the risk assessment and documentation of any incidents or near-misses. Share a copy of the assessment with your Church Safeguarding Officer, who is responsible for presenting it to the Church Council.

Part B – Activity Risk Assessment

Name of Activity	Date to be reviewed: <i>Around 12 months</i>
Church / Location:	Circuit:
Name of leader with responsibility:	Date Completed:
Signature:	
Name of Minister / Deacon / Lay Pastor:	Date Approved:
Signature	



Named Person for Resolving Location Risk Issues

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Lack of communication with meeting place management and system for reporting problems (e.g. building damage, incidents, or safety issues)	The group leader has a clear line of communication with the building manager or contact person. Any damage, faults, or incidents are reported as soon as possible.	Find out who you should report to, their contact details, and how to report any incidents, damage, or maintenance issues.		

Spiritual and Pastoral Care

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
The activity does not reflect the good news of Jesus or the Christian values of the Methodist Church. People may form a negative view of the Christian faith.	Make sure everyone feels welcomed, accepted, and valued. Leaders build positive, Christ-centred relationships with one another and with guests. Encourage and support friendships that reflect Christian love and care. Give people the chance to learn about Jesus and grow in their faith.	Create regular opportunities to work as a team—such as planning meetings and debrief sessions—to support and encourage one another.		
People observe or experience behaviours that are inappropriate or unhelpful to fulfilling the gospel aims. People may feel unsafe or uncomfortable. The group may not reflect Christian values. Safe practice may be compromised.	Make sure all leaders and volunteers have a copy of the relevant Code of Conduct. Ensure the environment is safe, and risks are properly managed. Leaders should always act as positive role models.	Speak to your church or circuit Safeguarding Officer for guidance or contact the DSO if needed.		
Activities are not age-appropriate or do not meet the group's needs. Participants may disengage. Opportunities for spiritual growth are missed. The activity does not reflect Christian purpose and values.	Choose themes and activities that match the age, needs, and interests of the group. Appoint volunteers who are appropriately skilled and gifted to plan and lead worship or spiritual content. Use thoughtful and suitable models of delivery (e.g., interactive, reflective, discussion-based). Ensure leaders pray regularly for the group and the event—before, during, and after.	(You can complete this section based on your current planning or needs.)		
The church is unaware of or uninvolved in the group's mission, leading to a lack of shared vision and support. The group may feel isolated from the wider church. Missional opportunities may be missed or underdeveloped. Leaders may feel unsupported.	Communicate regularly with church leaders and the congregation about the group's activities. Share prayer needs with the wider church family. The church takes responsibility for supporting and nurturing group leaders. Leaders share stories of faith, growth, and impact with the church. Church members contribute skills and experience to support activities. The church and group leaders work together to recognise and grow the missional opportunities of the group.	Identify simple and effective ways to share progress and stories with the wider church community (e.g. through notices, services, newsletters, or social media).		

Safer Recruitment: following the 12 steps to Safer Recruitment

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Lack of understanding as to what constitutes Safer Recruitment. (Step 1)	Methodist policy and procedure available - Safer Recruitment Policy, Procedures and Guidance - Updated January 2024	Does the venue have guidelines on how to recruit safely? If not, please contact your Circuit Safeguarding Officer		
Lack of understanding about local safeguarding measures in place. (Step 2)	Model church / circuit Safeguarding Policy available.	Ask the church for a copy of the Church Safeguarding Policy.		
Staffing lack of understanding about their role, therefore not able to provide the right kind of help and support. (Step 3)	Each person must have a role outline (volunteer) and job description / Personal specification (employed).	Ensure role outlines are created when the group is in the planning stage. Once the role becomes active revisit and update the role outline as needed.		
Lack of advertising leads to lack of choice in recruiting the right people with the right skills set. (Step 4)	However basic the method of advertising used, make sure all relevant people have the opportunity to apply.	Consider the best form of 'advertising' for your group and church. A simple notice in the church notice or on the notice board may be sufficient.		
Lack of information about the group / activity leads inappropriate people working for the group. (Step 5)	Ensure an Information Pack is available to all interested in volunteering / working for the group. Include information about the organisation and role.	Ensure information packs are created when the group is in the planning stage. Once the group becomes active revisit and update as needed.		
Lack of scrutiny of people coming forward leads to the wrong people volunteering for your group / activity. (Step 6)	Make sure every volunteer fills out an application form. Review each application fairly and thoughtfully.	Ask the designated safeguarding officer for a form if needed. Ensure you have a safe and confidential place to store documents – liaises with your safeguarding officer.		
Lack of additional checks allows unsafe people access to vulnerable groups. (Step 7)	People in roles requiring a DBS have been checked, prior to starting the role.	Find out who can complete DBS checks for your group. Ensure you have a safe and confidential place to store documents.		
Applicants not treated fairly and transparently (Step 8 & 12)	Treat all applicants as individuals and adapt to their specific needs. Value all individuals and their diverse and unique identity and background.	Leaders complete EDI and unconscious bias training provided free by the Methodist Church. Contact both successful and unsuccessful candidates, once a recruitment decision has been made.		

Safer Recruitment continued...

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Candidates' ability to meet the role outline are not taken into consideration, thus promoting unsuitable people to a role (Step 9 & 10)	Before a person starts a role, honest conversation takes place so that expectations and be shared and any protentional issues identified.			
People are selected, not because they are suitable, but to ensure enough 'bodies' are present. (Step 11)	Only suitable people are recruited to the role, even if that means start dates are delayed.			
Lone volunteering (This doesn't mean being totally alone. It's any situation where someone is doing a volunteering activity where visual or verbal contact with other volunteers or members is likely to be infrequent AND where accidents or incidents may prevent them from being able to raise an alarm.)	Lone volunteering is not permitted when working at height or in a roof void - loft or attic.	If lone volunteering is likely to happen, have you provided a copy of the Lone Working Policy?? Do you have suitable arrangements in place? Think about whether you'll be lone volunteering when opening and closing your unit meeting place.		

Safer Working Practises when Managing Children's Activities:

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Staffing levels – lack of staff overseeing the activity can lead to an increased risk for all involved.	Guidance provided in the Methodist Produced document entitled Safer Working Practises when managing children's Activities.	Ensure careful planning around: - The gender balance of volunteers - The length of the activity - The experience and competence of staff - Provide additional staff if any children have extra support needs. - Consider the size, layout, and visibility of the room or outdoor space. - Assess whether the type of activity requires extra adult supervision.		
Unaccompanied Children – does the parent /carer understand that it remains their responsibility to ensure their child arrives and leaves church safely.		Prepare a clear procedure for situations where an unaccompanied child attends the activity. Prepare a procedure for when a child is not collected after the activity ends. Ensure all leaders and volunteers are familiar with both procedures and know who to contact for support (e.g. Safeguarding Officer or parent/guardian).		
Mixed aged activities – children will have access to other adults whose circumstances are unknown.		Consideration should be given to whether additional DBS checks need to take place. Consideration needs to be given to who supervises children and young people.		
Safe Environments – are risks understood and planned for?		Insurance, first aid kits and fire precautions should be checked, and a health and safety check should be completed regularly.		
Special and additional needs – do you have a clear understanding of how to meet the needs of every child.		Devise a way that allows parent / carers to share important information about their child. Do you know how to access additional support, if needed, to help you take reasonable steps to meet a child's needs.		
Whistleblowing – do staff feel confident in sharing concerns?		Promote ways of empowering people to proactively share concerns, without fear of repercussions.		

Staffing

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Risk of unsuitable or unprepared volunteers due to incomplete recruitment, expired DBS checks, or lack of training.	Volunteers follow the Methodist Safer Recruitment process, adhere to the Code of Conduct, and complete Safer Spaces Foundation training. Leaders also complete the Advanced Module.	All volunteers must complete an application form. Assess each role for DBS requirements—those without DBS must not be left alone with guests. Ensure training is appropriate and up to date; safeguarding training must be renewed every 4 years.		
Fitness/ability of volunteers, young members and others	Create individual risk assessments for pregnant individuals and wellbeing plans for those with additional needs, in consultation with them. Update plans as needed to ensure safety and inclusion.	Are risk assessments or wellbeing plans in place for pregnant individuals or those with additional needs? Have allergies, medical conditions, and required adjustments been considered and recorded to ensure safe, inclusive participation?		
Adult to child ratios to make sure there's adequate supervision	Supervision must meet group needs and minimum ratio requirements. Volunteers should not be left alone with a child. Follow Methodist Church guidance.	Review the activity to ensure enough volunteers for safe supervision. Plan for changes in volunteer or group numbers. Manage drop-off and pick-up to avoid any volunteer being alone with a child.		
Lack of volunteers for a planned session. Volunteers phone in sick and unable to attend.	Set a minimum number of volunteers for safe operation. Share rotas and ensure all volunteers know who to contact if they're unwell or unavailable.	Provide a clear rota so volunteers know when they're on duty. Ensure they know who to contact if unavailable. Follow up with absentees and hold a debrief after each event.		

Nature of the Activity

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Clothing and footwear	Clothing should suit the activity, location, and weather conditions.	A dynamic risk assessment should be carried out during the activity to manage unforeseen factors, such as weather conditions for outdoor play.		
Special events, visits or adventurous activities	Subject to a separate risk assessment.	Have you completed an appropriate risk assessment for any planned special events, visits or adventurous activities?		
Short-duration activity at heights below 3 metres.	All activities are reviewed to minimise work at height where possible.	Review activities to avoid work at height where possible. If unavoidable, ensure safe, appropriate equipment is used and control measures are followed.		
Risk of injury from thrown items or collisions during games and activities.	Participants are aware of others and their surroundings, including buildings and spectators.	Think about your building and surroundings. Is there a risk of property damage and do you need to take additional precautions?		
Use and sharpening of sharp items like knives, scissors, axes and saws.	Supervision and controls are put in place as appropriate for the activity.	Will you be using knives, scissors, axes or saws? What, if any, additional controls are needed?		
Use of electrical appliances and extension leads	Use battery-powered equipment where possible. If not, keep electrical items near sockets to avoid trailing leads.	Carry out a visual check before use. Remove any damaged equipment from use until repaired or replaced. Extension leads must NEVER be plugged into one another.		
Storage and cooking of food Allergies and food intolerances	Basic food hygiene training and simple guidance is available for all volunteers.	If you're planning to prepare food, work through guidance from the Food Standards Agency.		
Incorrect storage and handling of chemicals	Leaders check chemical hazard labels and first aid info, and take appropriate precautions as needed.	Are you using hazardous chemicals (e.g. glues, aerosols, cleaners)? Check labels for warnings, first aid info, and needed precautions like gloves.		

Location

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Uninvited people accessing the venue	Suitable self-contained space for your group that no one else can pass through except in an emergency	If this isn't possible at your venue, you need to consider what arrangements are in place and how you will manage this issue.		
Security	The venue must have an appropriate level of security.	Check that the room can be secured from the inside without blocking emergency exits. Ask venue staff if alarm training is needed.		
Account for building capacity, including shared use by other groups.	The limits are not exceeded.	Check if the venue / room has a set capacity and ensures it's not exceeded, especially with multiple groups. Confirm the limit suits your group's size.		
Risk of overcrowding if too many guests arrive.	Set a safe maximum capacity. Count guests on entry and politely turn away any beyond the limit.	Group leaders to take charge of managing capacity and ensuring overcrowding does not occur. - All volunteers to assist with counting and managing capacity, as directed.		
Inaccessible access points	Entrances and exits must be accessible for people with disabilities.	Review disabled access. Is it possible to access the space in a wheelchair or if you have physical impairments?		
Lighting	There should be adequate lighting so volunteers can run the activity safely, including in an emergency.	Check that the lighting is adequate, including when you leave the building. Ask about emergency lighting. Is it provided and tested regularly?		
All external entrance and exit routes must be safe	These should be well lit and maintained with no slip, trip or fall hazards.	Review these, paying particular attention to the proximity of roads, and/or public footpaths. Are there any issues with neighbours that cause you concern and need addressing?		
Opening and closing the venue	Ensure proper open/close procedures are followed and no one is left inside.	Are all responsible for opening/closing aware of and following procedures? Do they know any venue-specific checks (e.g. fire exits)? Are you confident in these arrangements?		
Toilets and washing facilities	Toilets, including accessible facilities, are available and meet guest needs.	Ensure on-site facilities are accessible, well-maintained, and meet group needs. Group leader should monitor them during sessions.		

Location continued...

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Clean and safe drinking water supply	Ensure a supply of drinking water is available; use bottled water if needed.	Check the provision of drinking water.		
Poor housekeeping or storage	General good housekeeping is maintained, and routine checks are carried out.	Is general housekeeping of a good standard with no obvious hazards?		
Storage facilities	A suitable and safe storage facility is provided.	Is venue storage available, suitable, and safe to access? Are special access arrangements needed?		
First aid supplies on site.	Church premises and/or individual groups have their own first aid kits.	If your first aid kit wasn't available, does the venue have one? If you use items from this kit, who is responsible for restocking it?		
Design and condition of the building, fixtures, fittings and equipment	Venue design and condition are the management's responsibility. Volunteers visually check equipment and report any issues	Have you noticed any damage (e.g. equipment, lighting, or asbestos areas) and reported it to the venue contact?		

Transport needed and associated issues

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Transport and Vehicles (Minibus)	- Drivers required to hold appropriate licenses. - Vehicle maintenance and servicing up to date. - Seatbelts provided and worn. - Pre-journey vehicle safety checks. - Vehicle logs maintained. - Insurance and MOT documentation up to date.	• Full, clean driving licence for more than two years old. • No unspent convictions for any serious road traffic offences. • Comprehensive car insurance for both private and business use. • Insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities. • Up-to-date road tax • Valid MOT (where appropriate)		

Medical and Health Needs

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Managing the spread of infectious disease	Ask unwell individuals not to attend. Dispose of soiled items properly. Promote regular handwashing and maximise ventilation.	Plan for regular handwashing. Identify which windows should be opened for ventilation and follow any venue guidance.		
Risk of burns from hot equipment, steam, fires, food, drinks, or other hot items.	Warn others about hot items and use protective gear (e.g. oven gloves). Limit group size for supervision and to prevent overcrowding near hot surfaces.	Do you have any activities planned that may need protective equipment? Do you need to limit the numbers involved in any activity to manage risk?		
Risk of choking from food, small items, or objects worn around the neck that could tighten or catch.	Activities are age-appropriate. Jewellery, scarves, and similar items are removed if they pose a safety risk.	Ensure activities are age-appropriate, especially for young children (e.g. choking risks like grapes or beads). Check if neckwear should be removed for safety.		
Risk of injury from tripping or collisions with tables, chairs, or other obstacles during activities.	Volunteers organise moving chairs, tables and any other obstructions out of the activity area, storing them in a suitable place before a game.	Consider if you'll need to move tables, chairs and other obstructions to do any activities when planning.		
Risk of person being harmed on premises due to trips, slips or falls	Before opening, check the building is safe—smooth surfaces, marked steps, and clear walkways. Support anyone with mobility needs and remove obstacles as needed.	All volunteers to be observant and helpful.		
Mental health difficulties and stress	Volunteers have access to resources to recognise stress or mental health issues and can offer support or make adjustments as needed.	Obtain and display relevant information and helplines from local or national organisations and charities.		

General Risks

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed
Check condition and suitability of all equipment, including electrical items.	Any equipment provided for use is suitable and maintained in a good condition.	Check what equipment is available for use and what, if any, checks are undertaken to ensure it's safe to use.		
Access to other people's equipment	Access to other people's equipment is restricted either physically or by instruction.	Make sure people don't have access to other people's equipment.		
Fire safety	The venue must have a fire risk assessment, safety measures in place, and a clear fire evacuation plan.	Request and review the venue's fire risk assessment. Check for fire safety measures—serviced extinguishers, clear exit signage, unobstructed doors—and ensure you have the fire evacuation plan.		
Food preparation, storage and cooking facilities	Where provided these are in good condition, with venue management carrying out temperature checks of any fridges and freezers	Check the facilities against food hygiene guidance.		
Hazardous chemical storage	Any hazardous chemicals are suitably labelled and securely stored.	Check how hazardous chemicals (e.g. cleaning products, LPG, BBQ fuel) are stored and ensure safe storage arrangements are in place.		
Ensure furniture is suitable for the age, size, and physical needs of everyone using it.	Volunteers can handle furniture without injuring themselves.	Check the furnishings are suitable and consider storage arrangements for this equipment.		
Risk of slips, trips, or falls from floor hazards like wet surfaces, loose laces, breakages, or spillages.	Group leaders are encouraged to dynamically assess the meeting place before activities start.	Is there sufficient and adequate cleaning equipment and signs available?		
Cleaning arrangements and expectations	Clear cleaning arrangements are in place with adequate equipment and warning signs available.	Confirm who is responsible for cleaning and upkeep. If it's you, ensure suitable equipment and signs are available for use as needed.		
Risk from moving vehicles during drop-off, pick-up, or deliveries near the premises or in car parks.	Speed limits, one-way systems, marked parking, walkways, and signage are in place where needed.	Review vehicle movements outside and in car parks—are they safely managed and controlled?		

Emergency Planning

Add as situation is experienced.

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed

Part C: Guidance for Emergencies

Each group must keep a copy of Part C with them during every session

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed
Mobile phone signal or landline availability in case of emergency	A mobile phone signal or landline is available on site or no more than a 3–5-minute walk away.	This should be tested periodically to check availability.
Uninvited people accessing the building / activity	If other groups are present, keep participants separate (e.g. locked internal doors, assigned toilets). Have a leader at the door at the start and end to monitor access and exit. Keep external doors locked during sessions, ensuring emergency exits remain usable.	Group leaders should check with the church who else may be using the building and plan to keep groups separate. Have a plan to keep participants safe if an uninvited person enters.
Communication, and control of activities	Volunteers communicate with the group leader about any issues and keep emergency contact info. Clear systems are in place for giving and following instructions, and safety info is shared and updated as needed.	Do you need to share anything with the group leader? Is your emergency contact info current? Are there clear ways to ensure guests follow instructions? Has safety info been shared, and are required consent forms received?
Reporting of incidents, accidents and near misses, and post-incident support	Volunteers must report to the group leader: significant injuries, property damage, aggression or abuse (including verbal), serious near misses, and potential insurance claims. Incidents involving young members should also be reported to the safeguarding officer.	
Risk of fire	Before opening, team leaders and volunteers needs to carefully assess the building for fire risks. Ensure premises are safe. Take necessary measures to remedy.	Do you know what to do if a fire risk is identified?
Fire starting at the venue.	Fire-related activities are carefully managed. Volunteers know how to raise the alarm, evacuation routes, and assembly points. Fire exits are kept clear. Volunteers don't fight fires—only assist evacuation if safe, using the right extinguisher if needed.	When was your last real or practice fire evacuation? You only need to practise an evacuation once a year; a real evacuation can count. Ideally, the building management should conduct the evacuation. If this isn't practical, then you can walk through the evacuation process.
Emergency first aid is available. Bodily fluids are handled and disposed of safely and hygienically, following proper procedures.	Volunteers are encouraged to complete first aid training, including handling bodily fluids. At least one person on site should hold valid first aid training (e.g. First Response). First aid boxes must be accessible and properly stocked.	Is a trained first aider present during the meeting? Have you checked the first aid box is fully stocked and in date? Use a dated seal to show when it next needs checking—only open if the seal is broken.
Risk of medical emergency	-First Aider should always be present. -Injured person should not be moved by someone else. If they cannot get up independently, they must wait for emergency services.	First Aider and group leaders to be informed immediately and to make decision about whether emergency medical aid is required.
All forms of verbal abuse, bullying, harassment, and acts of violence or aggression are not tolerated and must be addressed immediately.	The Methodist Church has anti-bullying and harassment and whistleblowing policies in place and provides guidance on managing challenging behaviour.	For information only. You only need to take action if issues are identified.

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed
Guests behave in an aggressive/abusive manner towards other guests or volunteers.	Dealing with Verbal Abuse, Aggression, or Violence Individuals will be calmly and politely asked to stop the behaviour and step away to discuss the issue privately with a volunteer. Anyone targeted by the behaviour will be protected and removed from the situation if needed. The individual displaying aggression should be accompanied by volunteers until they calm down or leave. If they refuse to comply, they will be politely asked to leave the premises. If they continue to be disruptive and refuse to leave, inform them that the police will be called. In serious cases, call the police immediately and report the incident to the District Safeguarding Officer (DSO).	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Team will make decisions relating to whether a guest should be asked to leave.
Guest uses discriminatory language to another guest/volunteer.	The team leader will speak privately with the guest to explain why the language or behaviour is unacceptable. Depending on the severity, the guest may be given a “yellow card” warning, with a clear explanation that further incidents will result in them being asked to leave. The victim of the discrimination will be supported by a volunteer and reassured that the issue is being addressed. The incident must be reported to the District Safeguarding Officer (DSO). If the situation is serious or escalates, the police should be called, and the DSO informed of any actions taken.	
Two or more guests get into a disagreement	Guests will be politely asked to stop the behaviour and each given different volunteer(s) to speak to about the situation and deescalate the situation. If guests do not comply and continue to argue with each other, guests would be politely asked to leave premises. Report incident to District Safeguarding Officer. If situation severe, Police may need to be called and DSO informed of action taken.	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Group leaders will make decisions relating to whether a guest should be asked to leave.
Guest arrives under the influence of alcohol/drugs	If the person appears to be just mildly under the influence of drink or drugs but is coherent and following group rules, they will be permitted to stay. If their behaviour changes or they become disruptive or inappropriate they will be politely asked to leave. If situation severe, consider reporting incident to District Safeguarding Officer.	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Group leaders will make decisions relating to whether a guest should be asked to leave.

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed
Potentially toxic relationships are formed between guests who may have complex and competing needs Vulnerable guest overshares personal information with others.	Group leaders and volunteers to be distributed round the building, observing and joining in/promoting healthy conversations. If a problem emerges, volunteers can encourage guests to be boundaried and say “no” to unwanted requests for contact details.	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Group leaders will make decision as to whether situation needs to be reported/escalated.
A ‘stalker’ attends meetings	If the person being stalked is present, they should be kept safe and accompanied. The ‘stalker’ is accompanied and if necessary, asked to leave or the police will be contacted (this should be done immediately if an Exclusion Order is known to be in place). Report incident to District Safeguarding Officer. If situation severe, Police may need to be called and DSO informed of action taken.	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Group leaders will make decision as to whether situation needs to be reported/escalated.
Guest asks to speak to a volunteer in confidence	Leaders /volunteers should not be alone with guests in a separate room. If guest wants to speak in confidence, leave door open.	All volunteers to be aware.
Guest reports belongings lost or stolen	- Volunteers to assist person to search and (with consent) notify other guests of lost item. Volunteers to tell guests that the group does not take responsibility for lost/stolen belongings. - If theft is observed, team leaders to consider whether to confront individual if it seems safe or note down a description to inform Police.	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Group leaders will make decision as to whether situation needs to be reported/escalated.
Guest begs or asks to ‘borrow’ money from another guest or volunteer.	Before opening, group leaders will need to decide policy – e.g. can/will church give money to homeless or other person who is struggling in exceptional circumstances or not? Group leaders need to make themselves aware of local emergency services such as Social Services, Streetlink etc. Take guest aside and tell them they must not ask guests or volunteers for money. Signpost them appropriately for advice about benefits/finances. Ensure person being asked for money is OK and that they didn’t feel under duress to give.	All volunteers to share responsibility for observing behaviour of guests for problems. Team leaders will make decisions relating to whether a guest should be asked to leave.
Guest feels thankful and offers small gift.	Before opening, group leaders must decide response to small gifts being given. Small gifts (i.e. box chocolates) can be accepted and noted down in book. Large or financial gifts must be declined by individual volunteers/ group leaders. Person could be asked to make a donation to the group instead.	Team leaders to decide response before opening. Team leaders or volunteers to record any small gifts given.

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed
Risk of unaccompanied children (for groups not primarily aimed at children or young people).	Parents/carers must remain in the building at all times. Register is kept of who is attending and who came with children. Any unaccompanied children should be kept company by a volunteer until parent/carer has been identified. If parent/carer is not in building, emergency services would need to be called.	Team leaders to be notified immediately of any problems – they are responsible for next steps.
A guest discloses in confidence that they have a serious criminal record, for instance, sexual or serious violent offences	Team leader must be made aware and should discuss situation with guest, obtaining as much information as they will give. The guest must be observed at all times until Contract is set up. Guests should be reassured that they are welcome to continue to attend but advised that a Safeguarding Contract may be required. Guests to be asked for permission to pass on their contact details to Safeguarding Officer to follow up. Designated Safeguarding Officer and District Safeguarding Officer must be notified as soon as possible. Records must be kept.	Group leader /designated Safeguarding Officer must ensure District Safeguarding Officer is informed. DSO to be involved in Risk Assessment process and setting up Safeguarding Contract where appropriate.
A guest or volunteer discloses that they are aware of safeguarding concerns about another guest.	Team leaders must be informed and should discuss situation with discloser. The guest who may pose harm should be observed at all times. As soon as possible, the Designated Safeguarding Officer and DSO should be informed. -Records must be kept.	Group leaders /Designated Safeguarding Officer must ensure District Safeguarding Officer is informed. DSO to be involved in Risk Assessment process and setting up Safeguarding Contract where appropriate.
A guest or volunteer discloses that they are aware of safeguarding concerns about a volunteer or team leader.	Team leader / Designated Safeguarding Officer must be informed and should discuss situation with discloser. If the concern is serious, the team leader / volunteer may need to be instantly suspended/asked to go home. As soon as possible, the Designated Safeguarding Officer and DSO should be informed. Records must be kept.	Group leader /Designated Safeguarding Officer must ensure District Safeguarding Officer is informed. DSO to be involved in Risk Assessment process and setting up Safeguarding Contract where appropriate.
A safeguarding risk is disclosed which cannot remain confidential	Discloser should be informed of why the group leader feels the disclosure must be passed on to Designated & District Safeguarding Officers for action.	Group leader / Designated Safeguarding Officer must make decisions about whether to contact emergency services and to ensure District Safeguarding Officer is informed.

Part D

Activity Check List for Established groups

Name of Activity	Date to be reviewed: <i>Around 12 months</i>
Church / Location:	Circuit:
Name of leader with responsibility: Signature:	Date Completed:
Name of Minister / Deacon / Lay Pastor: Signature	Date Approved:

Please work through the following questions, indicating your answer with a ✓ or X. If the question is not appropriate to your group, please put N/A. At the end of the form, you can record the issues where you answered ‘no’ and how you have / intend to manage the risk.

While completing the checklist, if you answer ‘no’ to any question, refer to the corresponding question in Part B for guidance on how to manage the risk.

The checklist needs to be signed off by the Minister / Deacon / Lay Pastor and then a copy given to the Church Safeguarding Officer to share with the Church Council.

If you require help to complete this form, please speak with your Safeguarding Officer (church or circuit).

Section	Area of Concern	Answer with either ✓, X or NA
Named Person for Resolving Location Risk Issues	Do you have a clear line of communication with the building manager or contact person, and are you reporting any damage, faults, or incidents promptly?	
Spiritual and Pastoral Care	Do you create an environment where everyone feels welcomed, accepted, and valued in your group? Do you encourage positive, Christ-centred relationships and offer opportunities for guests to learn about Jesus and grow in faith?	
Safer Recruitment	When recruiting volunteer to the group are you following the Methodist Safer Recruitment Policy?	
Safer Working Practices when Managing Children's Activities	Is everyone in your team following the guidance in the Methodist Church's Safer Working Practices document when managing activities with children?	
Staffing	Have all volunteers followed the Methodist Safer Recruitment process, agreed to the Code of Conduct, and completed Safer Spaces Foundation training? Have leaders also completed the Advanced Module?	
	Have individual risk assessments been completed for pregnant individuals, and wellbeing or adjustment plans created for those with additional needs, in consultation with them? Are these plans kept up to date to support safety and inclusion?	
	Does your supervision plan meet the needs of the group and the required adult-to-child ratios? Have you ensured that no volunteer is left alone with a child, in line with Methodist Church guidance?	
	Have you set a minimum number of volunteers needed for safe operation, shared the rota with everyone, and made sure all volunteers know who to contact if they're unwell or can't attend?	
Nature of the Activity	Is everyone wearing clothing appropriate for the activity, location, and current weather conditions?	
	Have you completed a separate risk assessment for any special events, visits, or adventurous activities?	
	Have you reviewed the activity to minimise work at height? If it can't be avoided, is it below 3 metres and of short duration?	

Section	Area of Concern	Answer with either ✓, X or NA
Nature of the Activity, <i>continued...</i>	Have you made participants aware of others, buildings, and surroundings to reduce the risk of injury from thrown items or collisions during games and activities?	
	Have you put appropriate supervision and safety controls in place for using or sharpening sharp items like knives, scissors, axes, or saws during activities?	
	Are you using battery-powered equipment where possible, and keeping electrical items close to sockets to avoid trailing leads when mains power is needed?	
	Have all volunteers received basic food hygiene training or guidance, and are food allergies and intolerances considered when storing and preparing food?	
	Have leaders checked the labels and first aid information for any chemicals being used, and are appropriate precautions in place for safe storage and handling?	
Location	Is your group using a self-contained space that prevents uninvited access, with access only allowed in emergencies?	
	Does the venue provide an appropriate level of security for your group and activities?	
	Have you accounted for the building's capacity, including any shared use by other groups, to ensure limits are not exceeded?	
	Have you set a safe maximum number of guests, and do you have a plan to count attendees and politely turn away anyone beyond that limit?	
	Are all entrances and exits accessible for people with disabilities?	
	Is there enough lighting to run activities safely, including in an emergency?	
	Are all external entrances and exits well lit, safe, and free from slip, trip, or fall hazards?	
	Are clear opening and closing procedures in place, and is someone responsible for ensuring no one is left inside the building?	
	Are suitable toilet and washing facilities, including accessible ones, available and sufficient for your group's needs?	
	Is there a clean and safe supply of drinking water available at your venue? If not, have you provided bottled water?	
	Is general housekeeping maintained, with regular checks to ensure storage areas are tidy and free from hazards?	
	Is there a suitable and safe storage facility available, and does it meet the needs of your group?	
	Is there an in-date first aid kit available on site, either provided by the church or your group?	

Section	Area of Concern	Answer with either ✓, X or NA
Location, continued...	Have you visually checked the condition of the building, fixtures, fittings, and equipment, and reported any issues to the venue management?	
Transport	Do all individuals providing transport meet the following requirements? • Hold a full, clean driving licence that is more than two years old • Have no unspent convictions for serious road traffic offences • Carry comprehensive car insurance covering both private and business use • Have insurance that includes giving lifts for church-sponsored activities • Hold up-to-date road tax • Have a valid MOT certificate (where required)	
Medical and Health Needs	Are unwell individuals asked not to attend, are soiled items disposed of correctly, is regular handwashing promoted, and is ventilation maximised where possible?	
	Do you warn others about hot items and use protective gear (like oven gloves)? Have you limited the group size to ensure adequate supervision and prevent overcrowding near hot surfaces?	
	Have you checked that all activities are age-appropriate? Have participants removed jewellery, scarves, or other items that could pose a choking or entanglement risk?	
	Have you cleared the activity area of tables, chairs, and other obstacles to reduce the risk of trips or collisions? Are items stored safely out of the way?	
	Have you checked the building for trip or slip hazards before opening? Are steps clearly marked, walkways clear, and support available for anyone with mobility needs?	
	Do volunteers have access to resources to help them recognise signs of stress or mental health difficulties in themselves and others? Are appropriate support and adjustments in place if needed?	
General Risks	Is all equipment provided suitable for its intended use and regularly checked to ensure it is in good condition?	
	Is access to other people's equipment restricted, either by physical barriers or clear instructions to prevent misuse?	
	Does the venue have a current fire risk assessment, visible safety measures (like extinguishers and signage), and a clear fire evacuation plan in place?	
	Are the food preparation, storage, and cooking facilities in good condition, and does the venue management regularly check fridge and freezer temperatures?	

Section	Area of Concern	Answer with either ✓, X or NA
General Risks, <i>continued...</i>	Are all hazardous chemicals clearly labelled and securely stored in accordance with safety guidelines?	
	Can volunteers move and handle furniture safely without risking injury?	
	Do group leaders check for floor hazards like wet or uneven surfaces or spillages before activities begin?	
	Are cleaning responsibilities clearly defined, and is there enough suitable equipment and signage available to carry them out safely?	
	Have you assessed the movement of vehicles near your venue (e.g. during drop-off, pick-up, or deliveries)? Are safety measures like speed limits, one-way systems, designated parking, walkways, and signage clearly in place where needed?	

Action plan to address issues

Factors contributing to risk	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls in place or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, inset N/A	Date completed