Eastcote Methodist Church October 2026 Whistleblowing Policy for Eastcote Methodist Church

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on **15th October 2026**

This policy explains the process of disclosing to someone in authority, allegations of corruption, malpractice or wrongdoing. Eastcote Methodist Church seeks to operate all aspects of business to high standards of conduct and integrity. In the event that a church member/attender becomes aware of activities which give cause for concern, the Methodist Church has established the following procedure, which provides a framework, to allow concerns to be raised in confidence and, to allow for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter.

Eastcote Methodist Church is committed to creating a climate of trust and openness, so that a person who has a genuine concern or suspicion can raise the matter with full confidence that it will be appropriately considered and resolved. Any individual who makes a disclosure of wrongdoing or malpractice will be treated with respect and will be protected against victimisation, provided that there are reasonable grounds to suspect the wrongdoing; anyone who victimises a whistleblower will be subject to the Methodist Council's disciplinary procedure

What is Whistleblowing?

A disclosure made to someone in authority alleging corruption, malpractice or wrongdoing. The act of blowing the whistle is 'making a disclosure in the public interest'. The following types of activity or behaviour should be dealt with under this policy:

- Manipulation of accounting records and finances
- Inappropriate use of assets or funds of which the Council is the managing trustee
- Decision-making for personal gain
- Any criminal activity
- Abuse of position
- Fraud and deceit
- Serious breaches of procedure, which may advantage a particular party or any actions likely to bring the reputation of the Church into question.

NB: This is not an exhaustive list.

What action should the whistleblower take?

Eastcote Methodist Church encourages whistleblowers to inform someone with the ability to address the problem. Everyone should feel confident about taking the steps to disclose information. The following points will provide some guidance in doing this:

- All church members/attenders should inform the Minister, Dr Lynita Conradie, email Lynita.conradie@methodist.org.uk or the Senior Steward, email seniorstewardemc@gmail.com
- If the content of the disclosure involves the Minister, the Senior Steward should be informed and vice versa
- If the content of the disclosure involves the Minister (who is also the Circuit Superintendent) and the Senior Steward, then they should refer the disclosure to the District Chairs, email admin@methodistlondon.org.uk
- A potential whistleblower can at any stage of the procedure, seek legal advice or speak to Protect for guidance on the helpline 020 3117 2520 or whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

- The Government encourages whistleblowers to contact external groups where appropriate. For example, if someone has followed the internal procedure to alert the organisation about a health and safety issue and are still concerned about the risk this poses, they can contact the Health and Safety Commission. A full comprehensive list is available www.gov.uk/whistleblowing
- Elsewhere in exceptionally serious cases; where internal procedures have been exhausted, and the information is substantially true to their knowledge, church members/attenders may seek to disclose information to the police. The law requires the person making the disclosure to believe and understand the information to be true.

About to blow the whistle?

- Do think about the risks and outcomes before you act. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 is there to protect from victimisation. However, the law does require individuals making a disclosure to reasonably believe the information being disclosed is substantially true and is not for personal gain.
- Let the facts speak for themselves do not make ill-considered allegations
- Remember you may be mistaken or there may be an innocent explanation.
- Do not attempt to become a 'private detective'
- Ulterior motives such as personal vendetta remove your protection.

The role of the investigating officer

Concerns raised are taken seriously and there must be a thorough investigation into the root of the problem. This will determine whether the matter should be managed internally or externally.

- Compile a report with recommendations
- Notify the whistleblower in writing the outcome of the investigation
- Follow through to ensure there have been appropriate outcomes. For example, if the outcome required fire safety equipment and a fire drill test within a given timeframe, the investigating officer should ensure this is done.

Unfounded and malicious reports

If it becomes clear that the procedure under this policy has not been invoked in good faith, this will constitute misconduct and shall be treated as such. However, any person who, in good faith, makes allegations that turn out to be unfounded will not be penalised for being genuinely mistaken.

Conclusion

Eastcote Methodist Church is confident that the existing good practice and internal controls will ensure that cases of suspected fraud or impropriety rarely occur.
The Whistleblowing Policy is provided as a reference document and a commitment that any concerns raised will be taken seriously and action promptly.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council.
Next review date: **June 2027**



Signed ..... Chair of Church Council

Dated **15th October 2026**