



Darlington Methodist District  
Charitable Trust Registration Number  
1133814



## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY (revised September 2016)

### **Learning and Developing as the Whole People of God**

The Church expects that each of us, young and old, will grow and develop in our Christian discipleship.

The Methodist Church believes that we are able to do this when:

- we feel valued as individuals
- our real learning needs are recognised and addressed
- we have our experience acknowledged and are enabled to reflect critically on it
- we have the opportunity to learn from each other
- we nurture a learning community that is both valuing and challenging
- we are asked to question our current assumptions and practice
- we are expected to take responsibility for our own learning
- we are able to use our existing gifts and talents.

(Methodist Conference 2001)

The Darlington District encourages and supports opportunities for learning and development for all people, lay and ordained.

### **Presbyters and Deacons**

Standing Order 745 (4) (a) allows time for such development:

All ministers stationed by the Conference in accordance with Standing Order 780 (1) (i), (ii) or (iii) shall be entitled to five days leave in each connexional year, in addition to normal periods of leave, for the purpose of study, training or development.

b) Assistance with the costs involved shall be dealt with as follows:

(iii) in all other cases, the person concerned may apply for a financial contribution towards the cost of such study, training or development, these costs being borne in the proportions agreed in each individual case between the relevant District and the person concerned subject to the requirement that the person concerned shall be responsible for at least one third of the costs.

In the Darlington District:

1. In addition to the annual District Retreat the District will organise 1 or 2 days in each year, which will provide learning and development opportunities for ministers. Where it is appropriate these days will also be open to attendance by lay people. All who attend these days will be funded by the District.

The money is available for most forms of development, e.g. courses, retreats, etc and these may include:

- Connexional training events.
- District organised events.
- Events organised by others, outside the church.

**This money cannot be used for book grants.** It will not be used for someone who attends preparation for retirement, introduction to circuit nor new superintendents attending superintendency training as these courses are paid for out of a different budget.

The maximum amount that can be claimed by any minister is £300 per Connexional year. It will be possible to allow for a maximum of two years to carry over on the proviso that the person doing so demonstrates that in both those years they are committed to continuing development in ministry.

Where the money is for an individual to attend an event that is not District nor Connexionally organised it is expected that the District, Circuit and individual will pay one third of the cost each. Although the circuit may pay the individual minister's costs.

Money for grants for people undertaking further academic study is dealt with separately.

Where a circuit wishes to pay towards the development or training of its ministers, this will not be taken into account in the above process, unless a minister then also applies to the District for funding.

### **Lay People**

1. The District will make funding available for any Methodist member in the District to attend District approved or sponsored courses. Those attending such courses may apply for funding to the District Training Fund Administrator. Funding will be limited to 1/3 of the cost of the course, a maximum of £150 per person in any one Connexional year and will be subject to availability of funds.

2. Subject to written confirmation from the Circuit Superintendent [that the applicant has been accepted for Local Preacher training] Local Preachers on Note may apply for up to 100% of the cost (maximum £400) of the 1<sup>st</sup> Local Preachers Residential weekend.

Further applications, during the same connexional year, for subsequent courses will be subject to Clause 1 above.

3. Circuits may apply for funding on behalf of lay people in positions of leadership in the life of the local church or circuit who are attending courses or events, which are not sponsored by the District. Such funding is subject to the approval of the District Grants Committee or the Training Fund Administrator acting on their behalf.

4. The Chair of District may similarly apply for funding on behalf of lay people in positions of leadership in the life of the District who are attending courses or events, which are not sponsored by the District.

5. Grants administered by the Children and Young People's executive are available for young people and adults for training, equipment and conferences.

6. Funding is not available for academic courses or books through this route. However, the Darlington District has a modest Training Bursary Fund, which is managed by the District Grants Committee. For more information contact the District Grants Secretary.