

HOLYWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

The church has a growing children's and young person's ministry and takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the church's care. A child or young person is a person under 18 years of age. A worker should be anyone aged 16 years or over who is engaged in work or a voluntary activity which involves contact with children or young people

STATEMENT

1. The church is committed to provide, in a Christian environment, the highest possible care for children and to safeguard their welfare by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm
2. All individuals recruited to work with children or young people will be required to complete a church application and declaration form and to meet with the organisation leader to discuss the task and our child protection guidelines.
3. This Policy and the Guidelines will be issued to all workers. Parents of those attending the activities may request a copy.
4. All workers will treat others with dignity, respect, sensitivity and fairness when involved in church organised activities.

GUIDELINES

These Child Protection guidelines relate to:

- Responding to allegations of abuse of children, including those made against workers or members of the church
- Appointing children's/youth workers and helpers
- Promoting good practice
- Putting good practice into place
- Residential and day activities
- Internet, data protection and photographs

What To Do If You Suspect That Abuse May Have Occurred

Tell your leader in charge.

Complete a 'Report of Concern' form – Form 9.

Give the form to your leader in charge who should report your concerns as soon as possible to the Child Protection Co-ordinator who is nominated by the church to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES HOLYWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

SECTION 1 – CHILD PROTECTION & SAFE RECRUITMENT

1.1 DEFINITIONS

A **Child** is a person under the age of 18 years

A **Vulnerable Adult** is an adult at risk who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

1.2 WHY CHILD PROTECTION?

- ▶ A child is brought to crèche on a Sunday morning for the first time. The child's parent is concerned that the child will be properly looked after. 'How many adults do you have with the children? What will you do if my baby needs his nappy changed?' These are natural questions for a caring parent or carer to ask. How do we give the parent or carer the security of knowing that the child will be appropriately cared for?
- ▶ Over a period of weeks you notice that one of the children in your midweek group has bruises that she is trying to conceal. Should you be concerned? Is it your responsibility?
- ▶ You are planning to take a group of young teenagers away over a weekend. You discuss appropriate sleeping arrangements. One suggests that adults sleep in the rooms with the young people to ensure their safety. Another says that an adult should stay awake all night. What are the appropriate measures to take?
- ▶ One of your youth club leaders shows affection through physical contact - an arm around the shoulder or a hug. Some of the teenagers enjoy the attention, others avoid it. Someone questions whether this kind of behaviour is appropriate. What, if any, action should be taken?
- ▶ You discover that a person who has recently started worshipping with you has a conviction for an offence against a child. Who should be told? What should be done?

These are the kind of situations that these guidelines address. It is about encouraging best practice in our dealings with children and young people in the life of our church to enable them to develop and grow in the security of a community that has learned how to offer appropriate care, and to ensure their safety and well-being. It is necessary because children and young people are sometimes harmed by people who are called to care for them, and more rarely by strangers. The harm can be intentional or unintentional. It can be malicious or caused through thoughtlessness or inadequacy. We need to be open and honest about the reality of the world in which many of our children grow. We also need to acknowledge that this world impinges on our church communities.

- ▶ best practice will serve the needs of all our children at each stage in their development;
- ▶ some of the children we welcome into our church community may be children who are harmed at home;
- ▶ some people who are looking for opportunities to harm children will establish relationships with children through church communities;
- ▶ thoughtless or careless attitudes and behaviour on the part of children's workers and youth workers can be harmful for young people;
- ▶ people sometimes unnecessarily place themselves in situations in which they are open to accusation or suspicion;
- ▶ survivors of child abuse will be in many of our congregations – they, in particular, will want to know that the church is doing all it can to prevent others in the present and future suffering the pain they have lived with through their lives.

1.3 WHAT A CHILD NEEDS

Respect: Children's ideas of what is important may be very different from yours. Try to remember this when a child wants to tell you something urgently, even if you are busy.

Physical care: This includes warmth, adequate clothing, enough to eat and safety from hazards.

Praise: This will help children to grow up to be secure, confident adults.

Attention: Listen to children, not just their words but to anything they might be trying to tell you by their behaviour.

Trust: Make sure that the children know that you trust them and that you will always take what they say seriously and seek to help them.

Love: This is the most vital need of all.

Taking care to select the appropriate leaders and team members can meet these needs.

1.4 TYPES OF ABUSE

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional setting by those known to them or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include failure to thrive at school etc.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose their leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

BULLYING

Bullying is another way in which children (or adults) abuse other children, and it can be verbal or physical. It includes teasing, making unkind comments about a child, demanding money, ganging up on a child or physically assaulting a child. One might see evidence of torn clothes, bruising, burns, or scratches. A child might be afraid to attend school or other activities if they think the bully will be present. The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically.

1.5 WHO ABUSES CHILDREN?

- Rarely a stranger.
- Usually someone who knows the child, eg parent, babysitter, sibling, relative, friend of the family.
- Sometimes, someone in authority such as teacher, youth worker, children's worker or church worker/leader.

- Sometimes, paedophiles and others who set out to join organisations (including churches) to obtain access to children.

1.6 RECOGNISING POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

PHYSICAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse associated with self harming.

INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia – associated with self harming.

EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring.

1.7 HOW TO RESPOND TO A CHILD WANTING TO TALK

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but listen carefully to what the child says without prompting or using leading questions.

YOU SHOULD NOT

- Take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is actually taking place.
- Act alone.
- Take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns they may have.

YOU MUST

- Talk to the leader in charge and complete Form 9 – Report of Concern. If the concerns involve the leader, contact the appointed co-ordinator for the church. If the appointed co-ordinator is involved in the actual allegations, contact the pastor.

PROCEDURE

1. The person who has the concern should tell the leader in charge.
2. The person who has the concern should complete Form 9 – Report of Concern which the leader will give you.

Try to have available:

- The name and address of any child you are concerned about
- The nature of any injury or complaint
- The need for medical attention (if any)
- Your reason for suspicion of abuse
- What you have done already
- Any other information you may have, such as the name of the child's GP, school etc.

3. The organisation leader gives the completed Form 9 – Report of Concern to the Designated Co-ordinator.

GENERAL POINTS

- Above everything else, listen, LISTEN, LISTEN.
- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – **don't promise confidentiality.**
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- As soon as possible write down what has been shared.

HELPFUL THINGS YOU MAY SAY OR SHOW

- You have done the right thing in telling.
- That must have been really bad.
- I am glad you have told me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises.
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else."

CONCLUDING

- Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to Social Services or the Police to prevent a child or young person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse).
- Contact the person in your church/organisation responsible for co-ordinating child protection concerns. If they are unavailable, go directly to Social Services or the Police/NSPCC.
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you), writing down exactly what the child said and when s/he said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

1.8 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS FOR A CHILD OR AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

Where possible, concerns should be passed to the **Child Protection Co-ordinator** but difficulty in contacting this individual should not delay action being taken.

Where a child has a suspected physical injury or symptom of neglect:

- The Child Protection Co-ordinator should contact Social Services direct (this may be the Duty Children & Families Team or called something like Children's Services - out of hours the emergency duty team) if there are concerns that a child may have been deliberately hurt, is at risk of 'significant harm' or is afraid to return home. Do not tell the parents in such circumstances. It may also be helpful to have the contact number for the police child protection team. (For a definition of 'significant harm' see page 4).

- If a child needs urgent medical attention an ambulance should be called or they should be taken to hospital, informing the parents/carers afterwards of the action that was taken. The hospital staff should be informed of any child protection concerns. They have a responsibility to pass these concerns on to the statutory authorities.
- If the concerns for the child centre around poor parenting it may be appropriate to speak to the parent/carer, offer practical domestic help and suggest, for example, a chat with the health visitor, doctor or the Social Services Department.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or frightened to seek help, then offer to accompany them. If they still fail to acknowledge the need for action it is possible to informally discuss the situation with Social Services without divulging their personal details (such as names and addresses) unless, of course, Social Services consider the situation to be serious enough to do so. In these circumstances it is important to realise there may be a bigger picture. Information may have come to light that might be a vital missing piece in the jigsaw. The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service is available to give advice in these situations.
- It is important to take older children's wishes into account when deciding whether to talk to parents/carers unless other children are potentially at risk.

1.9 WHERE THERE ARE ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- The Child Protection Co-ordinator should contact Social Services (Out-of hours, the Emergency Duty Team). DO NOT try to investigate the matter. The important thing is to relay the information to Social Services and/or the Police so they can carry out any investigation and take appropriate action under Article 66 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 .
- In the case of very severe sexual assault (such as rape), which may have occurred over the last few days, and where it has not been possible to get an immediate response from Social Services, contact the police in order to facilitate a medical examination by a designated police surgeon. This could provide evidence, which may be used in any criminal prosecution. (Older young people are able to decline such an examination if they are considered to be of sufficient age and understanding). Do not touch or tamper with any evidence, such as stained clothing.
- DO NOT tell the parents/ carers, they could be involved. It is also important no one else who might be involved is inadvertently alerted to the situation because this may lead to the child being 'silenced'. Allegations of sexual abuse are usually denied and often difficult to prove. (See paragraph 1.11). Remember, the child's welfare must be the first consideration at all times.
- Keep information on a need to know basis so that any alleged perpetrator is not tipped off. The child or young person also has a right for their privacy to be respected as much as is possible.

Should the Child Protection Co-ordinator not feel it necessary to refer the matter to Social Services but the children's worker (or anyone else) has serious concerns for the child's

safety, then the worker should contact the relevant authorities direct. The safety of the child over-rides all other considerations and it is important to remember that sexual abuse of children is a serious crime. The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service can advise in cases of difficulty.

If the allegation is against a church leader who has responsibility for implementing the child protection policy, the referral should be made direct to Social Services or appropriate professional advice sought, e.g. from the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service. The Pastor and or Elders should be informed of the action taken.

1.10 REFERRALS AND THIRD PARTY ALLEGATIONS

Where a third party alleges abuse towards a child, the role of the church worker is to gather as much information as possible from this person. They should be advised the information they have provided will be shared with the child protection co-ordinator and may result in a referral to the Social Services Department with their details. This is so that Social Services can contact them if necessary.

1.11 REASONS FOR NOT CONTACTING THE PARENT OR ALLEGED ABUSER

A child, young person or vulnerable adult might make a direct allegation of abuse naming the person who did it. Because of fear, confusion or other reasons the allegation might not be wholly accurate.

Informing a parent/carer of the allegation could damage any subsequent investigation by the statutory authorities if their reaction inadvertently alerts the person under suspicion e.g. the parent/carer going to see them to sort the matter out. It is vital no one from the church informs the parent/carer of the allegations at this stage. This decision should be left to the statutory authorities.

Another very important reason the alleged abuser is not contacted is that they could try to silence their victim with bribery or threats. Also, they could dispose of any incriminating material such as books, videos, DVDs, photos, computer files or text messages.

1.12 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST WORKERS & VOLUNTEERS

If the alleged perpetrator has a role among children in the church, or has any contact with children, seek the advice of Social Services and the police before taking any action such as suspension of employment. During an enquiry, it will be necessary to supervise the worker as closely as possible without raising suspicion during the period between the matter coming to your attention, the authorities being informed and the appropriate being action taken. The suspension of a worker following an allegation is by definition a neutral act but may be necessary because the priority is to protect children from possible further abuse or from being influenced in any way by the alleged perpetrator.

1.13 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people have always been curious about the opposite sex and/or experimented sexually. However, where a child has responsibility over another child (as in a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through engaging in sexual activity, this is

likely to be regarded as abusive. The same applies where one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child. This is not mutual exploration. Such situations should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great. Approximately one third of sexual offences are committed by children and young people.

Instances such as these would be investigated by the child protection agencies in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would also be regarded as a victim in their own right.

1.14 HELPING CHILDREN TO PROTECT THEMSELVES

It is recommended that at the commencement of the organisation's year a code of conduct is drawn up with the members' participation. While it is recognised that discipline may seem at times to be restrictive to young people, it is best enforced with their agreement. Such a code of conduct will help to create a safe, secure environment and an atmosphere where children will feel that they can confide in the leaders/workers. A sample Code of Conduct is attached at Appendix 3.

The areas which need to be considered include the following:

- Teaching them safety generally/strangers/good and bad secrets/touches etc. The Gospel presents marvellous teaching opportunities, e.g. in presenting the story of the prodigal son and his restoration to the father, children can be helped to understand physical contact which is good, acknowledging also other touches which can be unwelcome or wrong.
- Developing common sense rules.

1.15 CHURCH ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All church members have a part to play in welcoming children, young people and vulnerable adults, supporting those working with them and knowing who to speak to if they suspect that a person is being harmed.

ORGANISATION LEADER

To ensure that the church responds in a correct and prompt manner to accidents, or suspected child abuse, the organisation leader should ensure that:

- There is an Accident/Incident Book/Forms on the premises or with the leader
- He/she has immediate access to names, addresses and telephone numbers of the children/young people attending the organisation
- There is access to a telephone in the event of an emergency
- All leaders are aware of the reporting procedure in the event of an accident
- All leaders are aware of the reporting procedure in the event of an allegation of abuse
- He/she has a stock of Report of Concern forms
- He/she knows the name and telephone number of the Designated Person
- He/she is satisfied that all leaders have a good understanding of the issues relating to confidentiality.

LEADER(S) IN CHARGE

They must over 18 years of age and be appointed by the church, know the child protection guidelines, how to go about appointing new workers, principles of good supervision and what to do if there is concern about a child or young person.

WORKER

Responsible as a team member for working with children and young people and should be 16 years of age or over. They need to know the Child Protection Guidelines, what to do and have completed the appointment process. Where appropriate, Form 4 Volunteer Agreement should be given to the person.

HELPER

Within certain groups e.g. crèche, children's church helpers should be aged from 14 years and whilst they will assist with activities they must be supervised and never left alone with any child. The Leader in Charge should have the person complete Form 3 for under 18 years and use Form 4 their Volunteer Agreement, where appropriate. They will not count when considering worker/child ratios and should be responsible to a named worker.

CO-ORDINATOR

Appointed to be the contact person for any child protection concerns raised within the church and will know where to go to find advice when needed. The person should also ensure the appointments procedures are carried out effectively, confidential information is stored and leaders encouraged to provide good supervision, support and training for their teams.

1.16 HELP FROM TEENAGERS

Careful consideration needs to be given to the work teenagers will be doing with children and young people and the degree of supervision and support they will receive. The overriding principle throughout is that children and the vulnerable will be protected from those seeking to take advantage of their position and the opportunities available to them for significant contact.

It is wise to consider a minimum age before allowing teenagers to help work with children and within Holywood Baptist Church this is 14 years. Care will be taken to protect teenagers from being overworked or placing them in vulnerable positions as they are still children, being under 18 yrs. They must understand about child protection and confirm in writing they will abide by its terms. They should be responsible to a named worker, NEVER be in a position where they are providing unsupervised care of children and should not be counted when considering child/staff ratios.

1.17 ORGANISATION SETUP

Within each children's organisation, a clearly defined line of accountability should be in place, whereby all leaders/helpers report to the appointed leader in charge. The leader reports to the elders with whom ultimate responsibility lies. It is advisable that the elders

provide support, pastoral oversight and a yearly appraisal for all the work among children and young people.

Team meetings should be convened on a regular basis and at any given meeting, leaders/helpers must be informed of the specific programme, and be clear about one another's responsibilities.

Every organisation should aim to have a trained first aider. This is particularly important where high risk activities are involved. Leaders/helpers should have up-to-date contact numbers for parents/guardians. A trained first aider will have completed a recognised first aid course delivered by St John's Ambulance or other recognised organisations.

1.18 TRAINING

Opportunities for appropriate training will be provided not to make everyone an expert but to enable them to be well informed, aware of issues and supported in giving of their best.

1.19 APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE

Care needs to be taken to ensure that anyone who may be unsuitable for working with children/young people and vulnerable adults is not given that opportunity. This is the main reason for an application, selection and vetting process for all including people already recognised as of good standing. The process within the church is for the person handling the vacancy to:

1. Explain the nature of the job and child protection policy to the prospective person and that they should complete an application form and self-declaration relating to criminal conviction and complaints.
2. Explain that the person should not commence working with children before the outcome of the ACCESS NI check. The confidential check is carried out by the child protection co-ordinator and may take 5 to 7 weeks. In urgent cases the leader should contact the child protection co-ordinator.
3. The child protection co-ordinator will take up references, initiate the ACCESS NI checks and on completion contact the leader/ individual.
4. Throughout the year there should be the opportunity for workers to meet with leaders for support, training and discussion of areas of concern e.g. discipline. A review of leaders in charge should preferably be on an annual basis.

1.20 REFEREES

If the person has worked in a similar activity in the past always obtain a reference from someone who knows them in that context. If the person has moved from another church fellowship within the last five years always obtain a reference from their previous church (es). If the person has never worked in the role before and if they have always attended church, ask for at least one reference from someone outside the church fellowship. The application form should make it clear that you reserve the right to take up further references if appropriate, including from a previous place of worship.

1.21 INTERVIEW

A formal interview will be conducted for full time positions involving children in the church and informal interviews will be carried out for those of a part-time nature. Our Child Protection policy and procedures should be explained at the interview. This gives the individual and leader the opportunity to discuss the position and seek together the mind of God about their suitability, involvement and past experiences of contact with the group of people they will be serving. They should be asked directly whether they have been asked previously to leave any posts working with children or vulnerable adults.

1.22 APPOINTMENT AND SUPERVISION

Appointments should be made on the basis of a person's experience, ability and suitability to perform the tasks and roles of the post. The recruitment process should assist in determining the person's attitude towards, and motives for wanting to work with, children, young people and /or vulnerable adults, and therefore help in the recruitment decision. All appointments should be based on these criteria and not on the urgency of need or the availability of the applicant at the time, or any other factor. If there are any doubts about the suitability of a candidate, whether for a paid or voluntary position, then it is best not to appoint. No one has an automatic right to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Weigh up spiritual outlook and sense of calling, ability to relate to children, young people and vulnerable adults and the potential contribution they would make to the spiritual, social, emotional and physical well being of those they will serve. Appointments should be conditional on the successful completion of a trial period (usually six months) and the ACCESS NI check is completed **BEFORE** the individual starts the job.

Any paid appointee should have a written contract together with a clear job description, lines of accountability to the church leadership and an assigned supervisor with regular opportunities for planned meetings so that work can be discussed, issues aired and areas of concern dealt with.

It is important to arrange regular workers' meetings to review procedures to ensure a common approach, sharing of concerns and identifying other matters which may need clarification and guidance. No one should be working in isolation but as part of a team showing mutual responsibility for each team member. It should be accepted that anyone seeing another worker acting in a way that could be misinterpreted should be able to speak to the individual or the supervisor about the concern.

IF YOU DECIDE NOT TO APPOINT

All applicants should be notified in writing of a decision not to appoint. If an unsuccessful candidate asks for the reasons why they have not been appointed and/or are seeking honest feedback about their application and interview, it should be given. Obviously this requires sensitivity and tact on the part of the person giving the feedback, particularly if references are discussed. The reasons for non-appointment are particularly important where past offences have come to light, which were not disclosed on their application form. Though it is illegal to reveal information obtained through a criminal records check, an

unsuccessful candidate may need advice on directing their abilities into other areas of church life.

1.23 CRIMINAL RECORD – ACCESS NI

An Access NI check will reveal if the person has a criminal record or if any relevant non-conviction information is held. Simply doing a criminal record check is not a sufficient safeguard. Interviewing well and taking up references are equally if not more important. If someone is deemed to be unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults in the light of the information received the matter will be discussed with them and the pastor informed. No details of the person's record will be passed on.

2.1 RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST

Relationships between children, young people or vulnerable adults and their leaders take many different forms, but all of them can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The leader is someone in whom the individual has placed a degree of trust. The trust may be because the leader has an educational role, is a provider of leisure activities, or even is a significant adult friend. In every case, however, that relationship is not one of equal partners and there is the potential for the trust to be abused by the leader, who is in a position of power over the child or young person. It is now acknowledged that the imbalance of power that means that it is wrong for a teacher to develop a romantic relationship with a sixth-former or for a doctor to enter into a romantic relationship with a patient, can exist in other nonprofessional contexts. All voluntary organisations are now expected to have a policy which sets out the boundaries of such relationships.

A worker should **NEVER**:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or other's advantage.
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual.

2.2 ACCEPTABLE & UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

1. It is always wrong for a leader to enter into a sexual relationship with a young person. Whilst young people aged 16 or 17 can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, they may still be emotionally immature. Their vulnerability could be exploited either deliberately or unwittingly. In these circumstances it does not make any difference whether or not the sexual relationship is consensual. The imbalance of power makes it an abuse of trust.
2. It is not acceptable for a leader to form a romantic relationship with a child or young person with whom they have a relationship of trust. Such a romantic relationship (even if consensual) would not be a relationship of equal partners - the leader is always in a position of power over the young person and exploitation is almost inevitable, even if unintentional.
3. The inappropriate nature of romantic relationships is obvious where the leader is an adult, but less so when the leader is also a young person. However, if such a romantic relationship did occur, there would still be a confusion of the roles of leader and romantic partner. Normally in these circumstances the leader should cease either the relationship of trust or the romantic relationship with the young person.

2.3 GENERAL CONDUCT

Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity. Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and the effect you are having on the individual child or young person.

Listen well. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or young person is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the body language to better understand what is being said.

Be aware of the dangers arising from private meetings with children. Such meetings should be transparent and in the knowledge of another leader.

Ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that you are not left alone with a child. Where possible another child or worker should be present at private meetings or within sight or hearing.

Have at least two adults present with a group.

Ensure that a mixed group has workers from both genders.

Do not make unnecessary physical contact with children, e.g. horseplay.

Do not allow a personal relationship to develop with an individual child.

Conduct which could be misconstrued should be avoided.

Exercise discretion and caution in what texts you send, receive and respond to. As young people communicate these days via texting you need to avoid inappropriate comments/innuendos etc. that a young person might take the wrong way. Jokes, too, via texting might also be misconstrued.

Distressed children may need comforting—use your discretion and ensure that it will be seen by others to be normal and natural.

Those giving first-aid should ensure that other children or another adult are present when they are administering help.

Take great care in the setting of a residential or day trip where relationships tend to be less formal.

Following an incident where a worker feels that his/her actions may be misconstrued a report should be written and submitted immediately to the leader.

All workers (paid or voluntary) should contact the Child Protection Co-Ordinator where they have concerns regarding behaviour towards a child.

2.4 MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love and is God's heart. (Hebrews 12:5-12 and Proverbs 22:6). **Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding and pray for and with the child.**

Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare them with each other, but encourage and build them up, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.

Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model, setting a good example. You can't expect children to observe ground rules if you break them yourself.

Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy.

Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said – this avoids manipulation.

NEVER smack or hit a child and don't shout – change voice tone if necessary.

Discipline out of love NEVER anger. (Call on support from other leaders if you feel you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger.)

Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, a respect for property, and make sure the children understand what action will be taken if not kept.

Each child is unique, special and individual, and each child needs a different method of being dealt with. We need to ask why the child is behaving that way.

Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive, when together. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort.

Have the child sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to the child.

Take the child aside and talk to them, challenge them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.

Warn a child that you will speak to their parents and do so if necessary. Warn them, send them outside the room (under supervision), back into the church service or ban them for a week. (Never a total ban without reference to your leader and ensure parents are advised in cases of banning.)

If a child's behaviour is constantly disruptive, seek advice and guidance from a leader.

Pray before you meet and talk over the session before you leave.

Remedial action can be taken against a constantly disruptive child. They can be warned that you may speak to their parents/carers about their behaviour, they may be sent outside the room (under supervision), back into the church service, or, after consultation with a church leader and advising the parent/carer, be banned from attending the group for a period of time.

2.5 WORKING WITH DISRUPTIVE INDIVIDUALS

Sometimes children, young people and vulnerable adults become angry, upset and disruptive. Occasionally their behaviour may endanger themselves or others
If a person is being disruptive:

- Ask them to stop.
- Speak to the child to establish the cause(s) of upset.
- Inform the child that they will be asked to leave if the behaviour continues.
- Warn the child that if they continue to be disruptive, this might result in longer-term exclusion from the group.

If the individual is harming him/herself, another person or property then other people present should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, and with a second worker present, request the person STOP. If your request is ignored, you might need to warn the individual that you will consider calling for additional help, (e.g. Police) if they do not stop. In exceptional circumstances and with assistance, you might need to restrain the person to prevent them harming themselves, others or property whilst you wait for the police.

All workers should be trained in appropriate restraint techniques and how to diffuse volatile situations. The workers involved should always record what happened as soon as possible after the incident. This should include the following:

- What activity was taking place.
- What might have caused the disruptive behaviour.
- The person's behaviour.
- What you said and how you and others responded.
- A list of others present who witnessed the incident.

A copy should be given to the leader, a copy retained by the worker and a copy kept with the logbook.

2.6 TALKING AND LISTENING

You should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual members. There will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place but such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access, or with a door open, or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people.

Where possible another member or another adult should be made aware that the interview is taking place and should be present or nearby during the interview.

Whilst many churches have appointed adults to listen to and talk with individuals it must be remembered that children/vulnerable adults will often decide themselves who they want to talk to. They might test the adult out in some way before they are prepared to talk. Because of this, all adults, including the children's workers in a church/organisation, need to understand the importance of listening to and responding appropriately.

Those assuming a listening role should not be afraid to acknowledge their limitations and refer people on to those with the requisite skills. Sometimes it is difficult to know when that moment arrives but if in doubt, it is always better to take advice from a supervisor, being careful not to breach any areas of confidentiality between the listener and the person they have been helping. **Remember you are a listener NOT a counsellor.**

Having said this, it is important not to underestimate the contribution those with pastoral responsibilities can make in providing a listening, non-judgmental and caring environment. This may be all the person needs. However, if someone, for example, admits to regularly self harming or is suicidal, then counselling (and medical help) should accompany pastoral support.

2.7 EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming giving opportunity for the person or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk.
- Above all else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Try to remain calm, even if inside you are feeling somewhat different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and for those with disabilities ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille, etc.

2.8 TOUCHING

It is hard to conceive how you can be a nurturing, caring worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults without some physical contact happening at least occasionally! For example, if a child is distressed it is natural to want to put an arm round their shoulder. However, you must be conscious that what to you is an innocent touch may have another, more sinister meaning for individuals who have experienced abuse.

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. You should use your discretion in such cases to ensure that what is seen by others present to be normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same child over a period of time and never alone with a child. The following provides guidance on how to deal with certain situations;

1. If you find that the child is cringing or responding in a negative way to being touched, then stop immediately and find an alternative, non-tactile way to convey your concern.
2. Be aware of your own and other workers' behaviour in terms of touching. Always be prepared to answer the question, 'For whose benefit is this taking place?'

3. If you see another worker acting in ways that might be misconstrued, speak to them or to a leader about your concerns.
4. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

As hugs and kisses have become the norm within some church communities, we need to be aware that not everyone welcomes that kind of contact, including some children.

THEREFORE

1. Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. It is advisable to avoid touching a child when no-one else is present in the room.
2. Touch should be related to the child, young person or vulnerable adult needs, not the worker's.
3. Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child, young person or vulnerable adult rather than the worker
4. Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
5. Children, young people and vulnerable adults are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
6. Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
7. When giving first aid (or applying sun screen etc) encourage the child, young person or vulnerable adult to do what they can manage themselves, but consider their best interests give appropriate help where necessary.
8. Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
9. Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

2.9 PRAYING

Prior to praying, always make sure you have the individual's permission, and always pray in an open area where other leaders, and/or other group members around. Only those authorised by the church leadership should be involved in this ministry.

Ask the child what they are requesting prayer for and remember to listen to their reply. Speak quietly and calmly, never shout or raise your voice. Don't laugh at or dismiss out of hand if they want to pray for something you consider trite or irrelevant (e.g. my cat's poorly). If they do not have specific needs or requests then simply ask God to bless them.

Those praying with children, young people and vulnerable adults should always be alert to child protection issues and other concerns such as bullying. In these circumstances do not forget about or delay taking appropriate action because you are caught up with praying!

If you have prayed about a specific issue it may be helpful to write it down afterwards and give it to the child so that they can let their parents/carers know and remember it themselves.

If a person becomes distressed, stop praying. Stay calm and gently ask them what has caused the distress and talk to another leader if appropriate. Before continuing to pray, consider with whom they might feel more comfortable. Are there any gender issues? If unsure or the person remains distressed do not continue praying but stay with them until they are calm, offering them reassurance and complete acceptance. Then talk to the parents/carers, assuming you have no child protection concerns about them.

2.10 PRAYING PRACTICALITIES

When it comes to praying, consider your body language, particularly in relation to things like your height and the height of the person. Try to ensure you are on their level rather than towering over them perhaps by both of you sitting down; but do avoid crowding.

Refrain from placing your hands on a person's head as they may find this frightening or threatening. If you think they may appreciate something like an arm round a shoulder or their hand being held always ask them if this is what they would like *before* doing it.

Use clear uncomplicated language. Reflect back what the child has said to you, to show you have understood their prayer request. If a child says they are feeling tired, you could reply "let us pray for you as you are feeling tired" not "I think you are depressed, let's pray about that". Keep the prayers simple and short so you can then be confident your prayers have been understood.

2.11. GIVING ADVICE

Avoid giving specific advice about problems involving decisions. A child or vulnerable adult could be very susceptible to suggestion, particularly if they are distressed. Be careful what you say even if you believe you have heard from God about their situation. It would be far wiser to pray this through on your own or with another leader. Never advise the person to stop taking medication or cease seeing professionals involved in their care or welfare.

2.12 CONFIDENTIALITY

Never promise total confidentiality. Should a person wish to disclose to you a situation such as abuse within a prayer ministry context, you have a duty to pass this on to your church's Child Protection Co-ordinator/social services/police. You may need to gently give clear boundaries but reassure the individual that if you share anything about their situation with someone else it will be on a 'need to know' basis only and you will make sure they are supported and cared for. Before the child confides in you, they must be made aware that you cannot promise confidentiality if they divulge something to you that you are obliged to report.

2.13 CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Churches and organisations need to be aware that children, young people and vulnerable adults who have a disability can be at greater risk of abuse. They will often require more help with personal care, such as washing, dressing, toileting, feeding, mobility etc, may have limited understanding and behave in a non-age appropriate way. For example, a young person of 17 might behave in a manner more akin to a 2-3 year old, particularly in demanding cuddles or sitting on a worker's lap. Others experience difficulties in communication because they are blind, or deaf/blind, and are reliant on physical contact for communication. Some may have severe learning difficulties. All these factors make it harder to uncover abuse when it is occurring and in also setting boundaries that take into account the needs of these young people.

Workers should be aware that any child, young person or vulnerable adult attending an activity who has a special need or disability may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility (e.g. use of sign language and assistance in going to the toilet). They may behave in a non-age appropriate way. So it is important to set appropriate boundaries that take their needs into account, but also protect workers from false accusation.

You should:

- Ask the child, young person or vulnerable adult attending the activity, and parents or carers how their needs can be met, ensuring all workers involved with them are aware of their expectations. This includes the number of workers needed to assist for a specific activity to prevent injury. Some of these needs may be more easily met than others, so be realistic. A family may ask for changes to enable easier access to the building (ensure you meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act). Listen, and give feedback to the person, family or carer as to what can or can't be achieved and the reasons why.
- Ideally ensure that a worker of the same gender assists if they need help with toileting, but again discuss with the person, their family or carer to discuss their preference and your ability to provide this. E.g Sunday School with only female workers so is male person happy for a female to provide personal care, are the parents comfortable with this? Generally these issues once discussed can be agreed upon.

2.14 MOBILE PHONES AND TEXTING

Anything which compromises a leader's ability to maintain a safe environment and give their full attention to the supervision of children, such as using a mobile phone, should be actively discouraged. A blanket ban is not necessary as mobiles may obviously be useful in emergency situations. Use of mobile phones when transporting children and young people must comply with current legislation.

Text messaging is a quick and easy way to communicate with others and is a popular and often preferred means of communication with children. Leaders and their team members must be aware that intimidating, bullying or even abusive messages can be discreetly sent by text. Information sent in this way, even where well-meaning, could be misinterpreted.

Is it necessary and appropriate to hold the mobile phone numbers of children/vulnerable adults? The general principle is that all communications with children should be open, transparent and appropriate to the nature of the relationship. Contacting children and young people by phone, text or email should never be undertaken without parental knowledge and consent. In the first instance contact should always be made at the phone number the parent has provided on the child's behalf. Good practice would include agreeing with children and parents what kind of information will be communicated directly to children by text message. This information should only be "need to know" information such as the last minute cancellation of a training session.

Leaders and team members should

- Never engage in personal or sensitive communications with children via text messages.
- Carefully store phone numbers and only grant access to those who have a legitimate reason for having such access.
- **not** contact young people through chat rooms and social networking sites such as Bebo, MSN, Facebook, Twitter etc.
- not email children and young people directly as individuals on personal matters. Disclosed lists should be used for sending organisation information via a suitable and designated adult. The opportunity should be given to individuals to have their details removed by including e.g. "If you wish to be removed from this email list please contact the administrator."

2.15 FILMING AND TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations must be very careful if they take photographs or film footage of people and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or filming prohibited but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However it is perfectly acceptable to ask parent/carers to let you know if they do NOT want their children photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and that the onus is on the parents/carers to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:

- It must be made clear why that image/film is being used, what it will be used for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.

- When using photographs of children and young people use group pictures. NEVER identify them by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.
- Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.

Many mobile phones have digital cameras. Leaders/Workers should ensure that they only take photographs of children and young people in accordance with their church's policy on photography e.g. ensure that consent is obtained and all images are stored in accordance with Data Protection Act principles. It would be unwise to keep images on a worker's mobile phone. Images should be downloaded to the church computer and kept securely.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As followers of Jesus we will want to welcome children and young people into our church and give them time and attention. All children and young people, whatever their age, gender, racial background, culture, or disability, should have the opportunity to grow up safe from harm. As valued members of the church community, they should be treated with respect, listened to and kept safe. Churches and groups often fail to provide guidelines in relation to the general supervision of children as well as specific activities. It is easy to assume that everyone understands what appropriate supervision is and is working to the same end. It is important therefore, that clear guidance of expectations is given to all workers in order to ensure quality childcare, protect children from possible abuse and workers from false accusation. Some general areas are outlined below:

- Workers should treat all children /young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- Consideration should be given to how many workers should be involved with the group and whether there should be male and/or female worker/s or both.
- Have a clear strategy for summoning additional adult help (if needed) in situations where a worker is alone with a child (eg small Sunday school classes).
- The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- The privacy of children should be respected, avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
- Where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling) and a young person is being seen on their own, ensure that other workers know the interview is taking place and that someone else is in the building.
- No person under 16 years of age should be left in charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.
- Ensure that the only people allowed to participate in a children's activity are the workers assigned to that group. Other adults should not be allowed free access.
- Consideration could be given to issuing cloakroom style tickets for parents collecting children from the crèche, particularly for large groups

3.2 SUPERVISION – GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. As far as possible, a worker should not be alone with a child or children, where their activity cannot be seen. On church premises, this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room. Glass panels in doors are a great advantage in church premises.

2. In a counselling situation with a young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, ensure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom.
3. Don't invite a child or young person to your home alone It is acceptable to invite a group if you ensure that another adult is in the house. Establish that each parent/carer knows where their child is and at what time they should return home.
4. Children and young people must not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present.
5. At no time should one adult be alone on church premises with a child or group of children and young people.
6. Make sure you have a suitable ratio of staff to children and young people.

3.3 SUPERVISION – RATIOS

Below are suggested ratios of adult to child, recommended for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event. These are the ratios required in regulations governing day care for under 8's.

Age	Adult : Children	Comment
2 yrs & under	1 : 3	
3 yrs	1 : 4	
4 to 7 years	1 : 8	(preferably one of each gender) plus 1 extra adult for every 10 children
8 years & over	2:20	

NB. Day Care regulations cover activities which last for six days or more, for children up to eight years of age where there is no one with parental responsibility with them and where the activity lasts for two hours or more in a day.

It may not, in practice, be possible to achieve the same standards as for registered activities, but it is vital to ensure there are sufficient adults for child supervision. .

For children over 12, there is no official guidance. A suggested ratio is two adults (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 children, with an additional leader for every 10 children. Following a risk assessment, this ratio would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered high risk or dangerous, or when catering for children with disabilities/special needs.

3.4 HOME VISITS

Workers and leaders may need to make home visits from time to time. The parents/carers may or may not attend church and it is important therefore they have been given information about the group including contact telephone numbers. It may also be useful for the person doing the visit to have formal identification.

Guidelines for visiting:

- Inform a leader or another worker of the proposed visit.
- Never go into a child's home if a parent/carer is absent.
- Keep a written record of the visit detailing the following:
 - The Purpose
 - Time you arrived and left
 - Who was present
 - What was discussed
- If the parent/carer is absent when the call is made, leave some means of identification and explanation for the visit that can be given to them if the child is home alone or with other children.
- The invitation of a child to a worker's home must be done with the knowledge of the team/leadership and the permission of the parent/ carer.

3.5 REGISTRATION: PARENTAL CONSENT FORMS & REGISTER

When the child becomes a member or becomes involved in an activity run by an organisation, it is important at the outset that a general information and consent form (Form 5) is completed and returned giving contact details of parents/carers, plus medical and other details such as allergies or special dietary requirements. This form should be renewed annually.

A register of those attending a club or activity should also be maintained, together with a register of workers. This should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if the participant does not attend the whole session. It is also good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities.

Parents/carers may or may not attend a place of worship even though the individual does. It is important that they are given information about the group and activities including contact telephone numbers.

Remember to keep Parents/Carers informed.

There should be a clear understanding of what sort of activities the child or young person will be doing and the time limits of these. Arrangements for returning the children to their parents' care should be clarified. Where children are collected from activities, nominated persons should be identified by the parent/carer as acceptable to carry out this task.

3.6 INFORMATION

Ensure you have details about each person attending the group/activity, namely;

- Their name, date of birth, address and contact number for each child maintained in a register.

- Consent forms for medical treatment and travel arrangements.
- Given parents/carers a written statement about who is caring for their child, with workers' or leaders' name(s) and telephone number(s). Mention the church has a child protection policy in place.

When arranging a day trip, a special activity or a residential stay, parents should be given full information prior to the event and a consent and medical form should be completed. The information to be given to parents should include the following:

- Name of visit or activity.
- Date(s).
- Venue / destination. Overnight accommodation for the group has been assessed and is suitable.
- Name, address and telephone number of leader responsible for the event.
- Names of other leaders who will be present.
- Contact telephone number of the venue (or mobile number of leader).
- A brief description of the activities/programme. If young people are not to be supervised all of the time, this should be made clear to parents.
- The fact that Leaders are competent to provide the activities planned.
- If specialist tuition/training is being offered, details of tutors/trainers etc and any relevant qualifications (e.g. if you are taking a group canoeing, sailing or abseiling etc).
- Departure place and time.
- Return place and time.
- Cost (including to whom cheques should be payable).
- Transport arrangements are appropriate for the group and journeys planned.
- Items to be brought (e.g. coat, swimming kit, walking boots, packed lunch, money etc).
- Date by which reply is to be made, and person to whom it should be sent.

The Parental Consent Form should be returned prior to the activity and should be taken on the activity by the Leader.

3.7 SUGGESTIONS/COMPLAINTS BY PARENTS/CARERS

Where a parent or carer wishes to make a complaint or make a suggestion about any activity or group the organisation is providing, it should be taken seriously. It is a good idea in the first instance for them to speak to the group leader who should endeavour to resolve the matter.

This should be followed up by a written response to the issue that has been raised and should be recorded and stored appropriately. The group leader should also be kept informed.

If a complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent or carer then the matter should follow complaints procedures within the organisation. This should be readily available for anyone to see

3.8 PEER GROUP ACTIVITIES

Whilst there may be a valid argument for groups of age 16+ being led and run by their peers, adult leaders should always be in the vicinity and should contribute to any programme reviews and planning. Peer-group leaders must be trained and supported by at least one adult worker.

The following should also be followed:

- If there are children/young people under 16yrs at an activity, adults workers should be present or within earshot.
- No person under the age of 16 should be left with the sole responsibility of caring for or supervising other children or vulnerable adults.
- Young people (over 16) who assist with caring for other children/young people should be subjected to the same recruitment process as adults and have undertaken safeguarding training.
- Peer-group leaders should be aware of safeguarding procedures, including reporting concerns (e.g. abuse, bullying) to their supervising adult and that sensitive information should not be shared openly in the group.

Parents/carers must always be kept informed about what peer-group activities are for, who the leaders are, how they are run, where they meet and what parents can do to support them.

3.9 UNEXPECTED ATTENDANCES AT ACTIVITIES

Sometimes children will want to join in with an organisation's activities without the knowledge of parents or carers e.g. children playing outside or wandering the streets with no adult supervision. In these circumstances it is important to:

- Welcome them but try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number. Record their visit in a register.
- Ask if a parent/carers is aware where they are, and what time they are expected home. If this is before the session ends, they should be encouraged to return home, unless the parent/carers can be contacted and they are happy with the arrangement. Suggest the child seeks the parent/carers's permission to return the following week.

- Link the visiting person with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain about the activity.
- On leaving, give the person a leaflet about the group with contact telephone numbers etc and perhaps a standard letter to the parent/carer inviting them to make contact.
- Without an interrogation, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any special needs, (e.g. medication), so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.

3.10 PARENTS/CARERS STAYING WITH GROUPS

There may be occasions where parents ask if they can stay to watch the children's group's activity. You should consider the following:

- Parents can be permitted to observe groups but not take part. A distinction should be made.
- It can help certain children settle into a group, if the child knows that a parent/carer is there. After the settling in period, if a parent/carer wishes to continue to stay, consideration could be given to them becoming a helper/worker but they would be required to undertake the same recruitment and selection procedure as with any other worker.
- Whilst a person watching may be a parent/carer for one or more of the children, to the rest of the children they are strangers.
- Be aware that for some children with special needs, it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This should be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

3.11 CONTACT SPORTS

With contact games, abuse can be;

Physical

e.g. Excessive training, Inappropriate training, the failure to protect in extremes of weather

Emotional

e.g. Giving undue criticism, Unrealistic pressure to perform, Verbal bullying- frequently being shouted at or taunted

Sexual

e.g. Inappropriate touching or treatment.

Therefore **watch** your language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.

There are a number of Dos and Don'ts which should help to protect children/young people.

Do – be public and open when working with children and avoid situations where you are completely unobserved.

Do – ensure coaches are in pairs of supervising groups in changing rooms and of the appropriate sex. Where appropriate, parents should take on responsibility for their children in changing rooms.

Do – ensure where mixed gender teams are involved each team is accompanied by a male and female person.

Do – always treat players in an open environment or if treatment is required within a closed area that parents are aware of this.

Do – ensure safety gear is worn and up to standard.

Keep parents informed of what is happening and obtain their consent where appropriate.

Don't – Play physical contact games with young people.

Don't – Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.

Don't – Allow ridiculing, bullying or initiation ceremonies.

Don't – Allow or engage in inappropriate or intrusive touching of any kind.

Don't – Make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun.

Don't – Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

Don't – Invade privacy of children when they are showering or going to the toilet.

Don't – Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

Don't – Take children alone on car journeys however short.

3.12 KEEPING RECORDS

A register of children or young people attending a club or activity should be maintained, together with a register of helpers. This should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if the child is not attending the whole session. Make a note of other people in the building (e.g. maintenance person, visiting speaker etc) and any other events taking place at the same time.

A logbook system should be used for all activities involving children and young people. Workers should write down unusual events or conversations, recording what they witnessed. This may be very helpful, for example, if leaders have to deal with a difficult child who subsequently makes an accusation of assault. A young person who repeatedly makes throwaway sexual comments about workers may, at a later date, make an allegation of abuse. In this situation, records of previous examples of this behaviour would enable any allegations to be seen in context. Patterns of behaviour or concerns might also emerge from log records that might not otherwise be so obvious. For example, bruising noted on a regular basis or a number of young people making similar comments about one worker that raise concerns. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights and the action taken. Log books can protect both children and workers.

Every child, young person, vulnerable adult, parent or carer should be able to view what is recorded about them in the logbook. This information would need to be kept in a way that does not breach the confidentiality of an individual. Whilst it is important to observe data

protection requirements, remember safeguarding is always the priority. Information about the prevention and detection of crime is exempt from data Protection requirements. It may, therefore, be inappropriate to release information to a parent, that has been disclosed by a young person, without first consulting the statutory agencies.

Information of a sensitive nature (e.g. a child disclosing abuse) will need to be kept separately in a secure place. However, a cross reference could be recorded in the logbook along the lines of "Jenny spoke to Bill tonight - see separate note in her file". In certain circumstances this information would need to be cross referenced between records.

3.13 LOOKING AFTER CHILDREN OVERNIGHT

This is an area potentially fraught with difficulties! It is impossible to lay down hard and fast rulings that will cover every situation. However, sensible precautions will minimise the risks for both workers and children and young people. **If the group of children has both boys and girls, then it is important to have a mix of male and female workers.**

There will be differences in the most appropriate way to deal with the overnight care of children and young people in light of the venue, the children's ages and other prevailing conditions. What is important is that the situation is discussed by the workers and an agreement reached together as to how they will proceed. Children are best protected in an environment where the adults concerned are aware of the issues of child abuse and there is an acceptance of the need to be watchful.

1. Male and female should sleep separately.
2. All parents/carers should be given written details of an identified contact worker, with an address and telephone number of the overnight location. Parents/carers must be advised in writing of how their children will be cared for in their absence. It will often be helpful to arrange a meeting with parents/carers before the event where questions can be raised.
3. Parents/carers must complete suitable consent forms in respect of their child's medical care; travel and collection arrangements; sleeping conditions; food; other specific activities; etc.
4. All medical information, plus emergency contact names and numbers, must be taken with the group to the location of the overnight care.
5. A reliable mobile phone is a useful tool in working away from the usual church base. Ascertain the telephone numbers for emergency situations before any possible crisis occurs.
6. The information and resources section contains sample parental consent forms and a checklist for the information that should be given to parents prior to the event.

MEASURES TO BE TAKEN

1. The person with overall responsibility must check that the person designated as the First Aid officer holds an appropriate, valid certificate.

2. Check the insurance cover of any building in which you will be sleeping. There may be a limit on numbers it accommodates. If you exceed these, insurance can be invalid.
3. Check the building and know where water, electricity and gas can be turned off. Know the fire drill for the building, and make sure you have a fire drill as soon as possible after entering the premises. Know where the fire extinguishers are. A Location Specific Plan should be displayed alongside the Fire Notice in each room.
4. Church halls and rooms used for sleeping larger numbers of people MUST have TWO means of exit.
5. Know where the nearest hospital and doctor are and inform the local doctor if you are sleeping there. It is also a good idea to notify local police. This applies if you are sleeping in any building, even if only for one night, and even if it is your own church. Also it is helpful to inform the fire brigade.
6. Ensure that parents / guardians have returned a health form stating any special dietary requirements and current medication, and also giving the name and telephone number of the person's doctor.
7. Residential activities must have safety rules boundaries, e.g. letting adults know where you are, not entering the kitchen without asking the cook, etc..
8. Make sure they have correct clothing for whatever activity they are taking part in. It is useful to issue a 'kit' list for residential activities.
9. Where outdoor activities are concerned, either leaders should have the appropriate qualification, or if the activity is being provided by an outside organisation, then the leaders should check that this organisation is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority and have appropriate insurance. Current guidelines suggest that for any camping or hill walking activity, the basic qualification which should be held is the Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA) or an equivalent, for example a scout or guiding qualification.

3.14 TRANSPORT

Where children are being transported by mini-bus the organisation needs to ensure there are guidelines in place and that these apply to all drivers and journeys carried out on behalf of and with the knowledge of the organisation. This does not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between adults with parental responsibility.

Advice for transporting children, young people or vulnerable adults is as follows:

- Driving should be restricted to those who have gone through the church's recruitment procedures for workers.
- All drivers must have read the child protection policy of the church and agree to abide by it.

- Parents / carers should be asked to sign a Transportation Consent Form (or include it in the General Information and Consent Form).
- The driver should hold a full driving licence, the vehicle must be adequately insured and the vehicle road worthy.
- Having checked drivers, it is reasonable to expect that they may be alone with a child for short periods. Consideration should therefore be given to dropping off the least vulnerable last and plan routes accordingly. Two workers in a vehicle does not in itself guarantee safety - there have been incidents where workers have acted abusively together.
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in the vehicle with someone they are transporting. If, for example, a child wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other children have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it isn't convenient to talk there and then, but arrange to meet them at a location where there are other adults around with the knowledge of the group leader. (Remember they may want to talk to the driver about an abusive situation).
- At collection or dropping off points no child should be on their own and the driver should make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult. This may also apply to a vulnerable adult, depending on the nature of their vulnerability and/or disability.
- If parents or carers do some transporting, ensure they are made aware that such arrangements are their own responsibility and not the organisation's.

3.15 CHECK LIST FOR TRANSPORTATION

Transporting children in a car

- Drivers should hold a current full driving licence.
- Insurance covers voluntary work (domestic, pleasure and business)
- Parental agreement obtained.
- Pick-up and drop-off times arranged.
- Agreement as to how many adults in the car.
- Agreement as to where children are seated – (front or rear of car, only transport for the recommended number of passengers.)
- Seatbelts used.
- Risk assessment completed if journey is part of an organised trip.
- Correct child seat restraints used for under 12s or children under the height of 135cm.

Transporting children in a minibus

- Driver has current full driving licence and is entitled to drive a minibus.

- Driver is over 25 years of age and entitled to drive a mini bus (check their driving licence).
- Driver has completed any approved training (may be a condition of hire from Local Authorities)
- Minibus log book is available to record the journey.
- Trained passenger escort is accompanying the driver.
- Accompanying adults are distributed throughout the minibus
- Passenger list completed.
- No children sitting in the front.
- All passengers using seatbelts.
- Every passenger has access to two emergency exits.
- All luggage stowed away securely without blocking any gangways or exits or luggage transported separately.
- Mobile phone available for emergency contact.
- Any defects or incidents recorded.

3.16 SWIMMING TRIPS

There should be an increased adult to child ratio for all swimming trips and prior to the trip the swimming ability of a child/young person should be established. A swimming consent form (Form 8) for each child (or a copy) should be taken by the group leader on the trip. A copy should also be retained by the contact person in your organization.

Before any visit to a swimming pool check:

- there will be a qualified lifeguard present at all times
- first aid/rescue equipment is readily available and this would preferably include a poolside telephone/alarm.

If appropriate to your party, check that the pool caters for children with disabilities. There should be adequate signs indicating the depth of the pool and depending on the age of the group you are taking, it is advisable to make sure that the shallow end is shallow enough! If the maximum depth of the pool is less than 1.5 metres, diving should not be permitted.

Checks should be made that the changing rooms are safe and hygienic and there is a changing room for each sex. They should be supervised while children are in there by at least two leaders per changing room. They should be of the same gender as the children, but supervised in such a way that the leaders do not watch the children actually getting changed. It may sound obvious but it is inadvisable for children to swim immediately after eating.

Children and children's workers should follow the rules of the pool. It is important children and young people know how to behave and take their lead from workers' own behaviour. Group leaders should supervise behaviour at all times and there should be a minimum of two leaders present while the children are in the pool.

Whilst the pool's lifeguard will be on duty to supervise swimmers this does not reduce the duty of care of leaders and workers, including being able to account for the whereabouts of all those participating in the event.

It is worth bearing in mind that because water activities often involve partial nudity, potential abusers are more inclined to make advances. This may include the person lingering around changing rooms or toilets. One way to supervise visits to the toilet is to use the responsible buddy system, i.e. two or three go to the toilet together. One uses the toilet whilst the others stand outside the door.

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters should be allowed only as a supervised activity, preferably in a recognised bathing area with a qualified lifeguard present. Obviously weather conditions should be taken into account. Even with lifeguard cover children should always be in the sight of the group leader and team. One of the team should stay out of the water for better surveillance and preferably hold a relevant life-saving certificate. Leaders must ascertain the level of the children's swimming ability and ensure adequate, increased supervision ratios for the particular group.

The limits of the swimming area need to be explained to the children before they enter the water along with other matters specific to the location. In addition, signals of distress and recall need to be adopted and clearly explained.

It is important to establish a base to which members of the group may return if separated.

Changing and showering facilities should allow appropriate segregation of the sexes and of children from adults. If there are limited facilities, timetables need to be drawn up.

All medical information and emergency contact numbers must be easily accessible and workers should have access to a telephone or mobile phone.

4.1 BULLYING

The damage inflicted by bullying can be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to individuals to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm. In these circumstances bullying should be considered as abuse and treated as such. It is **unacceptable behaviour** and may take many forms:

Physical—hitting, kicking, punching, theft.

Verbal—name calling, sarcasm, sexual comments/gestures, sectarian/racist remarks including emails/text messaging.

Indirect—spreading rumours, making rude signs.

Emotional—being unfriendly, being ignored, left out, ridiculing, threats, gestures.

Mobile Phone - silent, abusive or offensive calls, threats, text messages.

Unofficial activities e.g initiation ceremonies and practical jokes that cause unwanted physical or emotional harm.

Sometimes children being bullied are afraid to tell what is happening but some of the signs include;

- Not wanting to go to the activity.
- Asking for money or stealing food.
- Missing possessions.
- Crying to sleep, nightmares, bedwetting.
- Change in behaviour- withdrawn or aggressive

4.2 RESPONSE

There should be zero tolerance of bullying. The most important thing is how a bullied person FEELS so try to find out the facts by offering reassurance, explaining that bullying is wrong and that no one deserves to be bullied. Stress the person needs to tell the truth and that you will help them to stand up for themselves.

Ensure those who attend your activity know that bullying is unacceptable and that if they are bullied they should tell the leader, their parents or a friend or write a note to them. If they see someone being bullied they should mention it discreetly to the leader as people who are being bullied need friends and support,

PREVENTION

Strategies can be adopted to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of group rules

- Signing a behaviour contract
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

ACTION

- Report the bullying incident to group leaders
- Ensure that details are carefully checked before action is taken
- In all cases of bullying, the incidents should be recorded by the worker
- Consideration should be given to informing the parents/carers of the bully, but this should only be done if workers are satisfied there is no bullying/abuse going on at home that might exacerbate the situation
- If it is thought that an offence has been committed, consideration should be given to contacting the police
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and stopped quickly
- Help should be offered to help the bully address his/her behaviour
- The children's worker involved in dealing with the incident should issue a warning to the child concerned
- An apology should be given by the child who has bullied another
- If possible, those involved will be reconciled
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, the situation should be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated parents/carers should be informed of the action taken
- All incidents must be recorded in the log book

4.3 ACCIDENTS

All accidents, however minor, should be recorded in an accident book, Form 10 completed and the parent/carer of the child or young person informed as soon as possible.

4.4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

A desire to safeguard children and young people from harm will mean that we need to be safety conscious. This requires ;

- The Provision of adequate toilet facilities.
- Adequate lighting and heating.
- Safety of electrical sockets, heaters, windows, floors and PA equipment.
- Adequate facilities and procedure in the event of fire.
- First-aid box should be kept full and people trained in first-aid on site and accident book available.
- Fire drills should be carried out.
- Contacts are obtained in event of accident/emergencies and parental consent is provided in writing.
- Access security Is maintained. How easy is it for a stranger to enter during an activity without being noticed?
- Church premises are left in a clean and tidy condition.
- Any electrical equipment which is used must have been tested in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

An Accident Book and First Aid box is kept in the church office. Any accidents/incidents which arise must be recorded in the Accident Book with witness details.

Buildings being used for children's groups should be properly maintained. The external fabric of the building, plus all internal fixtures, fittings, lighting, fire exits and equipment should meet the required safety standards and an annual review should be carried out to consider all aspects of safety for children and young people using the premises.

There should be adequate toilets and wash hand basins and when food is being prepared, hygiene requirements must be observed. It is recommended that at least one worker should hold a valid Basic Food Hygiene Certificate. Provision should be made for an appropriately qualified first-aider to be available together with an adequate first aid kit.

Outside play areas should be appropriately fenced off with secure/boltable gates to prevent small children from straying from the premises. These areas should also meet required safety standards.

For any specific activity a 'Risk Assessment' should be carried out – See Appendix 4.

Safety requirements could also be publicly displayed on posters in appropriate locations around the building.

4.5 GENERAL SAFETY

Safety is of prime importance during any activity. That is not only the responsibility of the leader in charge but of every leader/helper. They should be aware of the following guidelines.

1. There should be adequate supervision by a leader/helper of certain equipment e.g. table tennis tables, snooker tables etc.
2. When using special equipment for your programme e.g. for 'one-off' activities such as trampolining, bouncy castle etc, ensure there is adequate supervision by trained leaders/helpers. You may also require special insurance to cover these higher risk activities. Be aware of the physical environment and remove/avoid items which may cause injury. If the organisation is undertaking what is deemed to be high risk activities, the leaders/ helpers must seek written permission from parents/guardians in advance.
3. If at all possible aim to have a trained first aider present. Where possible, leaders/helpers should be aware of any medication children are currently taking but this should not be given without written consent from parents or doctors. Leaders/helpers should also seek to obtain information concerning allergies and reaction to foods e.g. peanuts. Medication should be clearly marked, out of reach of children and securely locked away.
4. Be aware of the location of fire exits and ensure that they are 'unblocked'. Know where the nearest fire extinguishers are located. These must be checked regularly by a qualified person. Occasionally fire drills should be conducted to ensure that all young people know what evacuation procedure to follow in the event of a real fire. It is helpful to have a record of these.
5. During games or "ice-breakers", be aware of the risks of physical injury and guard against these.
6. Young people must be supervised at all times by a leader/helper while in the kitchen area.
7. Areas where maintenance work is taking place should never be used and where possible should be screened off. The church should keep organisation leaders informed about maintenance work.
8. A telephone should, where possible, be installed on the premises for safety purposes.
9. Each organisation should ensure the Church's Accident/Incident Report book records details of accidents/injuries/witnesses/date.

4.6 CHILDREN PLACED WITH HOST FAMILIES

Churches sometimes want to develop contacts with other churches through joint activities that involve children staying overnight with host families. Whilst some children/young people may be well known to a church, the members of their household might not. To avoid unnecessary risks to "visiting" children/young people it is suggested that:

- Every potential host family is asked to provide details of sleeping arrangements, meal times etc. together with a list of all occupants over 16 yrs.

- Every adult and young person (16+) in the household be asked to complete a questionnaire to include the following:
 - Name and date of birth.
 - Details of any current criminal investigation, or any charge or conviction for to a criminal offence.
 - Any reason why the home/household might not be suitable for accommodating children or young people?

- ACCESS NI checks are carried out on the host family.

Information for the host family

The need to protect both the child and to avoid false allegation should be highlighted. Each host family should therefore be given a copy of the church's child protection policy together with full details of the young person they are accommodating, including home address, parents' details, a home phone number and any other relevant information (e.g. medical details). It would also be useful to have a programme of activities.

Information for parent(s) /carer(s) of the child/young person being accommodated

- Details of the host family.
- A statement that all host families have been assessed by the church prior to the visit.
- A statement that the church/activity has a child protection policy.
- The phone number of a contact person if there are any concerns.
- A programme of activities.

SECTION 5 – RESIDENTIAL AND DAY ACTIVITIES CHILDREN. / VULNERABLE. ADULTS.

5.1 RESIDENTIAL HOLIDAY/CAMP

If using an established residential centre, checks should be made that it operates a safeguarding policy and carries out Disclosure checks on workers. A copy of its Child Protection Policy and insurance details should be obtained prior to booking and given to the Church Secretary. Organisations providing residential holidays should also carry out full risk and health and safety assessments. On a campsite or in the open countryside the hazards may be guy ropes and other fastenings, fires, camping gas and other flammable substances, access to fields where animals graze.

It is easy to assume that workers automatically know how to organise and run activities, and that children, young people and vulnerable adults have been taught personal safety. This is not necessarily the case so it is doubly important the organisation's expectations are clear and are communicated effectively.

5.2 POLICY OWNERSHIP

There should be a statement along the following lines:

- The Camp Organisers recognise that where workers from other churches/ organisations are joining the camp there is a need for clarity with regard to all child protection matters because churches / organisations may have their own child protection policy and procedures. It is expected that all sending churches agree that:
 - i. All allegations of child abuse will be referred to the Camp Child Protection Co-ordinator, (hereafter the Co-ordinator) or their deputy. If the suspicions in any way implicate both the Co-ordinator and the Deputy Co-ordinator, then Social Services or the church co-ordinator should be contacted in accordance with the child protection policy. CCPAS could also be contacted for advice.
 - ii. The Camp Child Protection Co-ordinator has responsibility to action all allegations or suspicions of abuse. If the suspicions in any way involve the Co-ordinator then the matter should be reported to the Deputy Co-ordinator.
 - iii. The Co-ordinator has the authority to contact either Social Services local to the child's home, the Police local to the Camp and CCPAS for advice.
 - iv. Allegations will be dealt with on a 'need to know' basis.
 - v. If allegations involve a child or worker from a sending church then the leader of that church or a nominated person (i.e. their child protection co-ordinator) will be informed. It is expected they will keep confidence and not investigate the matter themselves.
 - vi. Should some sending churches have reporting mechanisms which involve those other than the minister / child protection co-ordinator of the church, this will be discussed and

an agreement made between that church and the Camp Organisers (e.g. a church may have a responsibility to inform a bishop or other official).

5.3 RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

Any allegation against a worker should be reported to the police local to the camp. It would be important not to inform the worker of the allegation. Until the worker is seen by the police it would be necessary to supervise the worker as carefully as possible to prevent any possibility of further abuse or allegation. Once the worker has been interviewed by the police, they may well need to be asked to leave camp until the matter has been fully investigated. They should only return to the camp or other activity if the police are satisfied that there is no case to answer. The reason for not informing the worker of the allegation is to prevent him/her, if guilty, covering their tracks by silencing the young people before police arrive, or if innocent, false assumptions being made. Either way, this action will help to protect children/young people and/or an innocent worker. It is the expectation that all those at the Camp accept the camp policy and act according to it.

5.4 APPOINTMENT & SUPERVISION OF WORKERS

Where camps are organised with workers from various churches the procedure for appointment can be carried out by the home church and information passed to the Co-ordinator. It is important that all churches / organisations use the same forms and use identical procedures. Workers should be given an opportunity of meeting together before the holiday to discuss the programme/activities. It is also essential that there is opportunity for workers to meet together and receive supervision, to ensure a consistent approach to all work, particularly where a number of individual groups have come together.

5.5 RISK ASSESSMENT OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

Taking care of individuals who are away from home involves taking responsibility for their well-being at all times, being prepared for every eventuality, and anticipating situations where a person could be harmed and taking steps to minimise the risks. Form 7 must be completed to ensure that parents/carers are informed of the planned activity.

Before undertaking any activity the church should ensure that, related to the group to be involved, a risk assessment is carried out and it is advisable to appoint someone specifically for this task. The following are some areas that should be considered:

- Identification of hazards.
- Consider who might be harmed and how this might happen.
- Assess the risks and take action to remove or reduce them as far as possible.
- Record the details and what action you have taken.

A sample Risk Assessment is included at Appendix 4.

Compile a check list for each activity you are undertaking and include what risks could be encountered, the action required, the person responsible and the date completed.

In a building the following may be considered hazards (The list is not complete and the camp organisers will need to ensure a comprehensive audit of the camp is carried out and

completed beforehand): electrical equipment, loose fitting carpets, uneven floors, over-filled cupboards or containers, very high shelves, blocked fire exits, glass doors, missing light bulbs, splintered floorboards, power points, electrical cables, window fastenings.

On a campsite the hazards may be:

Guy ropes and other fastenings, fires, camping gas and other flammable substances, access to fields where animals graze (eg. bull.)

A daily log of all activities should be kept by every worker and significant incidents recorded in the log.

5.6 CAMP SAFETY

It is the responsibility of the workers to know the whereabouts of every individual who is on Camp at all times, including monitoring access on and off the site.

General safety rules should be applied as appropriate (e.g. no running round tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines). All workers should keep a daily Log of camp activities and any significant incidents recorded in the logbook.

The supervision ratio of workers to children per age range is as outlined in Section 3.3.

Each person attending must complete a Health Information and Consent form and no-one should be allowed to participate in any activity without the written consent of the parent/carer

CHECKLIST FOR SAFE PRACTICES

Know the children:

Have defined criteria for membership
Have a registration system for each person
Keep a record on each person, including medical details,
Any special needs and emergency contact numbers

Keep Records of:

Attendance
Accidents—keep incident book
Consents given for various activities
Any complaints or grievances

Pay attention to Health & Safety making sure that:

Any buildings used are safe and met required standards
There is sufficient heating and ventilation
Toilet, shower areas and washing facilities are up to standard
Fire precautions are in place
There is access to a phone
Equipment is checked regularly
Insurance cover is adequate

It is important to ensure that:

Children are not left unattended
Adequate numbers of leaders of both sexes are available to supervise the activities
Leaders know at all times where children are and what they are doing
Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment has constant adult supervision
Dangerous behaviour is not allowed

If the activities involve staying away from home overnight, attention should be paid to the following:

Safe methods of transport
Adequate insurance to cover all aspects of the trip
Written parental consent
Any information about individuals which may be relevant to staying away overnight like allergies, medical problems, or special needs
Appropriate and well supervised sleeping arrangements
Respect for the privacy of individuals in dormitories
Changing rooms, showers and toilets

Discipline and challenging behaviour:

Be prepared for coping with disruptive behaviour
More than one leader is present when challenging behaviour is being dealt with
Keep a record in a record book, describing what happened, the circumstances, who was involved, any injury to a person to property and how the situation was resolved

Training:

Review progress with team individuals to assess performance in the team.
Discuss any concerns, agree any changes and encourage one another.

APPENDIX 2

CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISING SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

When organising an outing or visit it is important to do the following:

- Visit proposed venue beforehand if possible to assess any risks
- Consider the individual needs of the children or vulnerable adults.
- Ensure Parent/carer signs consent forms before major outings and are informed of the itinerary.
- Ensure parent/carer completes and signs a medical form and provides emergency contact numbers.
- Ensure the supervision ratios are adequate for the size of the group, the age of the children and the activities planned.
- Ensure the group are appropriately supervised so that no individual gets lost and there is no unauthorised access to them.
- Records are kept of the vehicles used for transport , with named drivers and appropriate insurance cover
- If a minibus is used for transport, ensure that the Approved Minibus Policy is adhered to and it is roadworthy.
- If a coach is hired for the outing, ensure: the coach company has appropriate public liability insurance and is willing to work to safeguarding standards.
 - the coach driver is suitable
 - the coach has appropriate seatbelts fitted and that children wear them for the duration of the journey.
 - gangways, aisles and emergency exits are kept clear.
- Carry out a Risk assessment paying particular attention to:
 - Who might be harmed and how this might happen
 - potential dangers posed by strangers (adults and children)
 - A child's eye view of the outing in terms of possible dangers
 - Risks that may occur as a result of a special activity
 - additional help required for a particular activity (e.g. lifeguard for swimming).
- Check insurance is in place and adequate to cover all aspects of the trip.
- Check safety & control measures are established and any contingency/emergency plan is in place and known to all relevant persons.

A SAMPLE CODE OF CONDUCT

As members of this club we will:

1. Respect the authority of the club workers/helpers.
2. Respect the views and feelings of other members of the club.
3. Respect the right of every club member to express their view/opinion.
4. Respect the right of every club member to be heard/listened to.
5. Respect both workers/helpers and other club members' personal privacy and property.
6. Show due care and responsibility for equipment and property.
7. The following activities/behaviours are deemed unacceptable:
 - (i) Consumption of alcohol and smoking within the confines of the club building or during club activities.
 - (ii) Physical abuse of other club members and/or workers/helpers.
 - (iii) Verbal abuse including "put-downs" of other club members and workers/helpers.
 - (iv) Wilful destruction or damage of property or equipment.
 - (v) The misuse of any substance or stimulant.

When implementing the Code of Conduct, workers need to be insistent, consistent and persistent.

HOLYWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR (Name of Activity) _____

Event Date: _____

Identification of Hazards (i.e. What could reasonably be expected to cause harm)	Identification of Risks (i.e. Who might be harmed in what ways)	Existing Control Measures (i.e. What devices or procedures are in place to reduce or control the risk)	Risk Evaluation (i.e. How dangerous, how likely) (See next page for example of risk evaluation calculation)				Further Action Planned or Required To Control OR Reduce Risk
			Likelihood of Harm (1-5)	Probable Severity (1-5)	Calculated Risk (1-25)	Low (1-8) Medium (9-14) High (15-25)	

Signed : _____

Date Submitted : _____

Hollywood Baptist ChurchRisk EvaluationThe Quantitative Approach

Multiply the **LIKELIHOOD OF HARM (1–5)** by the **PROBABLE SEVERITY (1-5)** to **CALCULATE THE RISK (1-25)** and then clarify as **LOW (1-8)**, **MEDIUM (9-17)** or **HIGH (18-25)**

LIKELIHOOD OF HARM		X	PROBABLE SEVERITY		=	CALCULATED RISK RATINGS	
1	very unlikely		1	trivial injury		LOW	(1-8)
2	unlikely		2	minor injury		MEDIUM	(9-17)
3	50/50 likelihood		3	moderate injury		HIGH	(18-25)
4	likely		4	major injury			
5	very likely		5	fatality			

eg: tripping over a schoolbag and being injured:

Likelihood = **4**, Severity = **3** ∴ **4 x 3 = 12**, Risk Rating **MEDIUM**

