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2023

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy & Procedures



Ballymoney Baptist Church  
May 2023

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## Introduction

### Purpose of the church

Ballymoney Baptist

Church acknowledges the headship of Jesus Christ over his Church and exists to glorify the triune God by maintaining and promoting his worship both individually and corporately.

Its members devote themselves to the teachings of Scripture, to fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer and evangelism. They commit, with the help of God, to witness to the saving and sustaining power of the Lord Jesus Christ and to work for the extension of His Kingdom.

The principal charitable object of the church is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the teachings of Scripture, the Doctrinal Statement and Baptist principles.

- 1.1. Integral to this is our moral obligation to be mindful of the well-being of the children and young people entrusted to our care. It is expected and required that everyone involved in work with young people (hereafter referred to as “leaders and workers”) in association with Ballymoney Baptist Church will attend training to familiarise themselves with the advice and guidance given in this policy.  
This policy is a working document which is designed to ensure that the difficult and sensitive issues of child protection are dealt with properly, consistently and effectively by everyone. The guidance contained in this policy is designed to protect the young people attending Church events and to allow the leadership to discharge their legal obligations to look after the safety and welfare of the children in their care.
- 1.2. Ballymoney Baptist Church follows the guidance provided by the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI). Their role is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland through a coordinated approach and sharing of information between agencies.
- 1.3. This policy is approved by the Eldership of Ballymoney Baptist Church

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation:

### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

According to the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child, which the UK government signed in December 1991, children have rights relating to:

- reasonable standards of living;
- protection from violence, abuse, and exploitation;
- protection for those cared for away from home and for those with a disability;

- being able to use their own language, enjoy their own culture, and practise their own religion;
- the protection of the environment in which they live.

The UNCRC lists a number of statements, setting out the rights which all children and young people up to the age of 18 should have, no matter where they live or whatever their circumstances are. In the context of this guidance, the most important of these are in three articles:

- Article 19 provides that children have *the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them*;
- Article 12 further provides that *a child who is capable of forming his own views should be assured the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child*, those views being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child;
- finally, and most fundamentally, Article 3 provides that *when organisations make decisions which affect children, **the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.***

## Children (NI) Order 1995

The Children (NI) Order 1995 deals with the care, upbringing, and protection of children. It has five underlying principles, which have clear implications for all involved in work with children and young people.

1. **Paramountcy** - The welfare of the child **must always be the paramount consideration** in decisions taken about him or her.
2. **Parental responsibility** - Parents have responsibilities to their children rather than rights over them.
3. **Prevention** - This is about preventing situations arising where children are unnecessarily separated from their families. It is also about the State providing services to keep children safely within their families and to promote their health or welfare.
4. **Partnership** – This encourages us to work in partnership with parents and other agencies, as the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met.
5. **Protection** – This places a “duty of care” on all who work with children to report child protection concerns to the appropriate agencies.

Other relevant legislation is outlined in Appendix 1.

In the light of this legislation, it is prudent for us as a Church to be seen to be doing everything we can to ensure the protection of the children with whom we come into contact. In so doing, we will be giving parents confidence in our ministries, knowing that, if it is at all possible, their children will be protected from harm while in our care.

This document attempts to set out clear guidelines and procedures for all leaders and workers in Ballymoney Baptist Church. It includes a Code of Behaviour that every leader and worker must follow, not only to protect the child, but also to protect themselves from allegations of abuse. The Scriptures remind us to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matt 10:16). May we so be, for the sake of the children.

## Child Protection Policy Statement

We in Ballymoney Baptist Church believe that all the children and young people entrusted to our care should enjoy the facilities, meetings and activities provided by us without fear of harm. We wish to ensure that all children participate in a safe and enjoyable environment in which they feel valued. Ballymoney Baptist Church elders, with the assistance of all their children/youth leaders and workers, will take every appropriate step to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and young people with whom we work.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- adopting child protection guidelines through a Code of Behaviour for leaders and workers;
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, leaders and workers;
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
- following carefully the procedures for the appointment of leaders and workers;
- providing effective management of leaders and workers through supervision, support, and training; and
- ensuring that safety procedures are adhered to.

Our policy applies to all our leaders and workers and all involved in our work with young and vulnerable people. We accept and recognise our responsibilities for child protection. We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and practice at regular intervals, -at least every 3 years, or sooner where this may be required in order to keep up-to-date with new legislation. This will be done by the designated person.

Our policy was reviewed in May, 2023 by the designated person and ratified by the Eldership. The policy will be due for review in May 2026.

## Definition of a child

For the purpose of this guidance, a child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order.

## Code of Behaviour

This code of behaviour **is to be put into practice at all times by our leaders and** workers and is to be remembered even at sensitive times, e.g. when dealing with bullying, abuse or bereavement.

## General Principles

In all Ballymoney Baptist Church's activities, leaders and workers should give children appropriate time to express their opinions. All children should be valued and respected as individuals and leaders and workers should be available to listen to the children whenever necessary.

Leaders and workers are encouraged to praise children for good behaviour and show consistency in their approach to each child. Leaders and workers should encourage the children to participate in all the activities which are available, and their achievements should be recognised.

Leaders and workers should always work openly with children and take responsible precautions to ensure that they are not left alone with a child, completely unobserved.

**Remember you cannot rely upon your good name to protect you.**

All leaders and workers are expected to be good examples to the children and to work together with Ballymoney Baptist Church's elders and co-workers for the safety and benefit of the children.

Leaders and workers should ensure that activities are carefully planned in advance and that children are adequately supervised at all times.

## Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Leaders/Workers

Leaders and workers working with children must be exceptionally careful in today's climate not to put themselves in any situation where an allegation of abuse could be made. They must always err on the side of caution. However, an *excessively* negative emphasis could lead to a loss of vital contact and helpful relationships.

To help avoid placing themselves in a difficult situation the Code of Conduct below has been drawn up.

In order to reduce likely situations for abuse of children and to help protect leaders and workers from false accusations it is necessary that all leaders and workers should not:

- spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- take children alone in a car on journeys, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents and the leader in charge of the event. The child should travel in the rear seat;
- take children to any works'/leaders' home.

Leaders and workers should **never**

- engage in sexually-provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay - apart from structured sports activities;
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind;
- make **unnecessary** physical contact with children;
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually-suggestive comments about, or to, a child - even in fun;
- let allegations or disclosures made by a child go without being addressed and recorded;
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves;
- form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust; or
- use physical punishment or discipline out of anger.

## Physical contact with children

Leaders and workers should:

- be mindful of how and where they touch a child - the child must feel comfortable with the contact;
- should remember their size and strength during contact sports or games and restrict their involvement for the safety of the children;
- be aware that physical contact of a comforting and reassuring nature is a valid way of expressing concern and care. However, ***it is only appropriate if it is meeting the need of the child***; and
- be aware that physical contact should only ever take place with the consent of the child.

## Protecting children from harming themselves

- Sometimes restraint may need to be applied to a child in order to protect from self-harm or harm to others, or to avoid serious damage to property. It should never be used to inflict pain or as a general means of control.
- The proper use of restraint requires skill and judgement. Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied. Leaders and workers should never try to restrain a young person on their own. Another leader/worker may act as an assistant or as a witness.



- Remember that restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Following an incident when restraint has been used, a report should be inserted in the Accident/Incident Report form.

### **Meeting with individual children for counselling/guidance**

- Meeting with individual children should take place as openly as possible.
- If privacy is needed, the door should be left open and other leaders and workers informed of the meeting.
- The child should be between the door and the leader. The leader must not block the exit and it should be made clear to the child that they can leave if they feel uncomfortable.
- Ensure there is another leader/worker on the premises for the duration of the counselling/guidance session.
- If counselling/guidance is taking place other than at a Ballymoney Baptist Church event, this should take place in a public place, e.g, a coffee shop. It may be advisable to not go alone. The leader/worker should agree an appointment date, time and venue, confirm all details with the appropriate leader-in-charge and gain parental consent.

### **Guidelines for the Supervision of children/young people**

- Children should **never** be left unsupervised while in our care.
- Leaders in charge should be there to welcome the children and speak to their parents.
- Leaders in charge must be satisfied that those workers who supervise children and young people are fully competent to do so.
- Bus drivers should not be left to supervise children alone. The additional supervisor must be at least 18.
- Children must be supervised by two or more adults.
- Leaders and workers should know at all times where children are and what they are doing.
- Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment should have constant adult supervision.
- Dangerous behaviour by children should not be allowed.
- Young people (those under 18 years of age) who are helping leaders should not be left alone in a supervisory capacity with children.

**The standard recommended adult/child ratios are:**

0-2 years	1 adult to 3 children
2-3 years	1 adult to 4 children
3-7 years	1 adult to 8 children
8 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children.

There should be one additional adult for every 10 extra children and/or young people.

The ratio of workers to children with disabilities is dependent upon the needs of the individual child.

(In a “meeting” situation a ratio of one adult to 8 children should be aimed at, and on outings this ratio should be increased, where possible.)

### **Supervision of children on journeys/outings/trips**

The organisers of journeys/visits should plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities for the children who are involved in the project.

Leaders and workers are responsible for the welfare and safety of the children for the **whole time** they are away from home.

Primary-school-aged children should not be left unaccompanied, -for example, in a town for the evening or on shopping expeditions. However parental consent may be sought for secondary-school-aged children to have less direct supervision as long as they stay in groups.

All children should be adequately supervised and engaged in suitable activities at all times.

In circumstances when planned activities are disrupted, e.g. due to weather conditions, organisers should have a number of alternative activities planned.

Leaders and workers should obtain, in writing, parental consent for children joining an organised trip.

Parents should be given full information about a trip, including details of the programme of events, and the activities in which the children will be engaged.

## **In public with children**

Leaders and workers must:

- consider how they appear in public when dealing with children;
- always prioritise the safety of the child as paramount;
- not go into the toilets alone with a child; -if at all possible, another adult should be present;
- not shout at or roughly handle a child;
- gain permission from a person who has parental responsibility, before taking a child to any place other than the usual venue.

## **Guidelines on Bullying**

Ballymoney Baptist Church is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Ballymoney Baptist Church, whether it is emotional, physical, racist, sexual, verbal, or cyber.

If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the leader-in-charge. The needs of the victim of bullying are paramount.

Incidents of bullying must be investigated and recorded. Bullying must be stopped quickly.

In serious cases, parents should be informed and suspension of the bully (bullies) will be considered.

An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour and genuinely apologise. If possible, the children will be reconciled.

After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not occur.

## **Guidelines about Modern Technology**

A blanket ban on mobile phones is not necessary as mobiles may be useful in emergencies but their use should not be such that it compromises the leaders' or workers' ability to maintain a safe environment and give their full attention to the supervision of children.

Contacting children and young people by phone, text or email should not be undertaken without parental consent. When making contact, parents should be copied in. Leaders and workers should not normally make their mobile phone numbers or email addresses available to the children. Leaders and workers should not have the children under their care as personal friends on social media platforms.

The use of obscene images or language on mobile phones is not tolerated in Ballymoney Baptist Church meetings or activities and will result in confiscation of the mobile phone and parents being informed. Any confiscated phone should be turned off and placed in a sealed envelope immediately. It is good practice to get the child to sign the seal of the envelope. The designated person should be contacted.

Photographs, video or other images of children should not be taken without the consent of the parents and children. The purpose for which these images will be used should be made clear. Ballymoney Baptist Church will take all steps to ensure that these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended.

Photographs, videos and other images of children will not be displayed on the internet without parental consent. Group photographs should be used in preference to individual photographs and children should not be named.

## **Guidelines on Special Needs**

The Church has a Christian duty to be inclusive and to provide opportunities for children and young people of all abilities.

Leaders and workers need to be aware that children and young people who have a disability can be at a greater risk of abuse. Also, the definition of what constitutes abuse is wider for children with disabilities.

Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are welcome at Ballymoney Baptist Church. We will work in partnership with the child, parents and any professionals to establish how the child can be included.

Leaders and workers should be made aware of the child's special needs and how to deal with them.

Higher worker ratios may be required if the child has additional needs or behavioural problems.

## **Expectations from Children and Young People**

1. Respect the authority of the leaders and workers.
2. Respect the views and feelings of other children/ young people at the meetings and activities.
3. Respect the right that all children/ young people in attendance have to express their views and to be heard.
4. The following behaviours are deemed unacceptable at any of Ballymoney Baptist Church's meetings or activities:
  - the consumption of alcohol, smoking, or the misuse of drugs/substances;

- anti-social behaviour;
- the wilful destruction of property;
- the physical or verbal abuse of any of the leaders, workers, or other children/young people; and
- inappropriate use of social media / mobile devices.

## **Enforcing Leaders code of behaviour**

All leaders and workers will be given a copy of Ballymoney Baptist Church's Code of Behaviour and it will be available upon request for parents and members. Leaders and workers need to be consistent when implementing the Code of Behaviour.

Any breach of the Code of Behaviour will be dealt with in a careful and Christian manner. A meeting with the Designated Person, another member of the safeguarding team and the person will be convened with another person of the alleged offender's choice brought in to oversee the conversation. Depending on the seriousness of the breach a possible suspension would be enforced or in the case of a grave breach of trust the person may be asked to stand down with immediate effect.

Referral to PSNI will be made if appropriate. On the outcome and advice of any PSNI investigation the matter may be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service for their consideration as to whether or not the alleged offender should be barred from working with Children/Vulnerable Adults.

## **Sharing Information**

### **... with children and young people**

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have a *Right to Information*, especially any information that would make life better and safer for them. At all Ballymoney Baptist Church events, children/young people should be informed:

- of the rules and regulations for the event they are attending, and of our expectations of them, including how they behave towards other individuals;
- of the procedures in the case of an emergency;
- of the facilities that are available for their use at the venue, e.g. toilets; and
- about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints, and anxieties.

This information will usually be given at the commencement of the event by the person in charge.

### **... with parents**

Parents are responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible and caring organisation.

They should be aware of the nature of relationships with adults with whom their children form friendships.

To support this, we should:

- publicise information about our events on our website and Facebook page;
- visit homes in the area;
- make them aware that we have a child protection policy;
- make them aware of whom they should contact if they have concerns or complaints.

### **... with workers**

Good information will enable workers to know how to deal with emergencies and child protection issues. It will also enable them to pass concerns to the appropriate person within the Church.

Therefore, **all** leaders and workers will be provided with training in child protection policy and procedures, and this training will be updated at regular intervals.

### **Manner of sharing information**

When sharing information, Ballymoney Baptist Church will be sensitive to the level of understanding, maturity, and responsibility of the people with whom we are sharing. For example, the sharing of policy and procedures with children will be done in a manner appropriate to their age.

### **Gaining Essential Confidential Information**

Ballymoney Baptist Church seeks to ensure the protection of children and young people by gathering the following basic information:

- knowing who has parental responsibility for all children;
- having a record of the name, address and contact number for all parents/carers for use in emergency situations;
- making sure we have information about any health issues, medication and learning difficulties that affect the children/young people attending Ballymoney Baptist Church meetings or activities;
- obtaining parental consent for all activities and for the taking of photographs.

This information will be updated at least annually.

## Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of Ballymoney Baptist Church only to communicate information of a confidential nature on a “need-to-know” basis.

Personal and sensitive details which parents have confided about their children or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without the parents’ consent.

All leaders, workers and children must be aware that there are some situations in which confidentiality needs to be broken, specifically, if you are concerned that a person is in danger, either to themselves or from someone else, or if you suspect that an offence may have been committed.

**Leaders and workers must not promise confidentiality regarding information which causes concern that a child has been or may be at risk of harm.**

## Storage of Personal Data

The gathering and storage of personal data for Ballymoney Baptist Church meetings and activities is to be in accordance with the principles of the GDPR.

This essential personal information about children attending Ballymoney Baptist Church meetings/activities is to be stored securely but be readily available for use in emergencies. Electronic information is stored in line with the GDPR Policy.

## Accident/Incident Reports

The accident/incident report forms are to be used to record details of accidents, injuries and minor incidents. Details of persons involved, what happened, witnesses, place and date should be recorded. These are stored securely online. All written records concerning the children are kept online in case of emergency where information is required quickly. The leader in charge has access to the information. The accident book is also online for easy access when events occur off site. The QR code for quick access is found in the church kitchen.

The records kept are:

Children’s Information Form – detailing name, address, contact details and medical details;

Accident/ Incident Forms – filled in after emergency has been dealt with;

Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Form.

*(Copies of the forms are found in Appendices 2-4)*

## Grievances/Complaints

Everyone has the right to complain.

Workers, parents, or children who have a complaint or grievance should bring it to the immediate attention of the Designated Person. A meeting will be set up. An independent witness will be present.

## Procedures for Reporting Concerns

If a child/ young person/parent makes a disclosure, **no person should investigate the incident. Investigation is a matter for Social Services.**

## Designated Person

The Designated Person (DP):

- is the individual within the Church who has completed Child Protection Training;
- deals with the issues of child protection,
- offering advice to workers and volunteers,
- ensures procedures are being followed,
- and is the person to whom all concerns and disclosures should be brought;
- may be contacted at any time for advice/guidance.

All workers are to be informed of the name and contact details of the Designated Person, also found at the end of this policy.

The Designated Person, following collaboration with the Safeguarding team, may then discuss the concern/suspicion/allegation with Social Services, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral. It is not necessary for the Designated Person to hear any disclosure first-hand. This eliminates the need for the child to recount a traumatic experience more than once.

## What is Child Abuse?

The following are the definitions for Child Abuse as found in “Co-operating to Safeguard children and Young People”, March, 2016.

**Physical Abuse:** deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.

**Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development.



**Sexual Abuse:** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect:** the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

**Exploitation:** the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

**Bullying:** not in itself a form of abuse, but a child who is bullied may be suffering any of the types of abuse defined above. It takes many forms but the main types are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft);
- verbal (name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing);
- racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures);
- sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments);
- cyber (via mobile phones, email, web-sites) ; and
- emotional (excluding, being unfriendly).

The damage inflicted by bullying, can frequently be underestimated.

## Checking concerns

If something gives leaders/workers/others cause for concern, there are some things you can do to check your concern:

- ask the child – If the child has an injury you could ask, “What happened to you?” or if the child is upset, simply asking, “What’s wrong?” is enough to give the child an opportunity to open up;

- ask other leaders and workers – other leaders and workers may have insight into the situation that may immediately put your mind at ease. If not, they may have noticed something that will reinforce your concern;
- ask the parents – when leaving the child home, or when the parent comes to collect the child, it is possible to ask quite informally, “I noticed she wasn’t her usual bubbly self tonight. Is she alright?” Doing so will give the parent an opportunity to put your mind at ease. The problem might simply be that the child’s pet hamster has died. The parent’s response will guide you as to what to do next. Leaders and workers should be mindful that the parents may be the cause of the issue and should proceed with caution. Leaders and workers should pass on concerns to the designated person.

Remember – **do not investigate. Your responsibility lies in reporting concerns to the relevant person, (The Designated Person) who will then deal with the matter appropriately.**

### Reporting procedure for Concerns

It is not appropriate to record details of alleged or suspected child abuse in the accident/incident report form, so if leaders, workers or others have concerns about a child:

- fill in a *Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse* Form - try to include as much detail as possible; document the reasons for your concern, e.g. bruising, lethargy, sexual conversation inappropriate to the age of the child, etc. This form is available from the leader-in-charge or the Designated Person;
- give the form to the Designated Person who will contact you to clarify anything which requires clarification;
- quietly monitor the situation and report any further developments to the Designated Person, making sure these developments are recorded; but
- do not discuss your concerns openly with other leaders and workers unless you think they may be able to shed some light on the situation. Be discreet!

### Reporting procedure for Disclosures

If a child comes to a leader or worker and begins to disclose abuse, the table following outlines the procedure to be followed.

## Do

**Stay** calm;

**Listen** and hear – give the child time to say what he/she wants;

**Reassure** that he/she has done nothing wrong;

**Record** in writing what was said as soon as possible (Form available from leader-in-charge or Designated Person); and

**Report** to Designated Person.

## DON'T

Don't panic;

Don't ask leading questions e.g. "Did your Dad...?"

Don't promise to keep secrets;

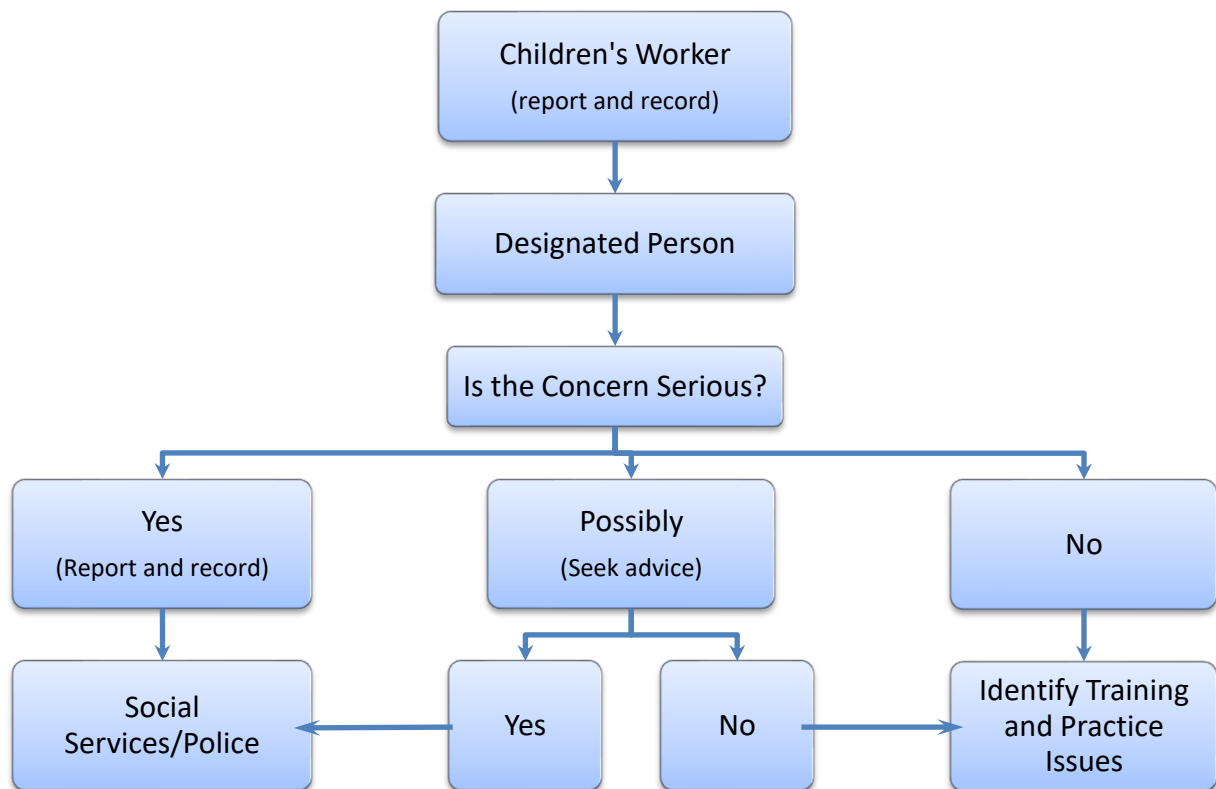
Don't inquire into details of abuse;

Don't make a child repeat the story unnecessarily.

## Some further help

- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after it has taken place, even if it is information you do not understand fully, or like writing down. **It is important** - stick with it! (*Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Form*). Use the child/ young person's words if possible.
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.
- Remember information must only ever be passed on a "**need-to-know**" basis. All concerns and disclosures need to remain as confidential as possible.
- If the Designated Person is not available, please contact the Deputy Designated Person.

## Flowchart for Reporting Concern about a Child



## Procedure for dealing with an Allegation against a Leader/worker

In the event of an allegation against a leader/worker the following procedures will be followed:

- fill in a *Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse* Form and give it to the Designated Person as soon as possible. The Designated Person will inform the Elders;
- the Elders, in conjunction with the Designated Person should inform the leader/worker of the nature of the allegation, providing him/her with opportunity to respond to the allegation and fully record his/her response.
- to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk, the leader/worker should be suspended from his/her position **after** consultation with the relevant statutory authorities;
- parents/carers should be informed immediately, after taking advice from statutory authorities as to how this might best be done; and
- forward the report and worker's response to statutory authorities as soon as possible.

The statutory authorities will decide whether the report indicates that significant harm has occurred and whether further legal action will be instigated.

## **IT IS THE ROLE OF THE STATUTORY AUTHORITIES TO CARRY OUT THE INVESTIGATION. IT IS OUR ROLE TO GATHER INFORMATION ONLY.**

It is very important to maintain close links with the statutory authorities in order to ensure that no actions taken by Ballymoney Baptist Church might undermine any formal investigations.

While the safety of the children is of paramount importance, the alleged perpetrator should be shown appropriate Christian love and support. Support needs to be provided appropriately in consultation with statutory services. A link person will be appointed to ensure the person is supported.

If Ballymoney Baptist Church elders identify a leader/worker as no longer suitable to work with children and he/she is debarred from that role; in light of the outcome and advice of any PSNI investigation they may also need to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service so that the person's name can be considered for the Barring List from Working with Children.

### **Allegations against the Designated Person**

If an allegation is made against the Designated Person, the Elders of the Church should be informed. *The Record of Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse Form* should be **given directly to the Deputy Designated person** as soon as possible. The Church will deal with the allegation according to the procedure outlined above.

## **Appointment of Leaders and Workers**

The eldership of Ballymoney Baptist Church is responsible for the appointment of all leaders and workers who work with children and young people in their various ministries. All leaders are members; and helpers will be known to the church and have a confession of faith.

To help prevent unsuitable persons from working with children and young people in Ballymoney Baptist Church, it is recommended that three steps are followed.

1. If the eldership considers a person suitable, and no current disclosure check is available, they must ask the Designated Person to arrange for this to be undertaken, after consent is received from the person concerned.
2. Ballymoney Baptist Church is using “Baptist Youth” as an umbrella organisation to request disclosure checks for all potential leaders and workers. “Baptist Youth” will inform the Ballymoney Baptist Church’s Designated Person on the status of any disclosure checks.
3. From September 2019 all new leaders and workers must have their disclosure check completed before commencing work among children and young people in the Ballymoney Baptist Church.

It is good practice for each area of children’s/ young people’s work to provide the Designated Person with a list of all current workers.

## **Checks with Access NI**

Access NI is the organisation in Northern Ireland that processes the police record checks, providing criminal history information. An enhanced check is necessary for all persons who work in a regulated position with children and vulnerable adults. In Ballymoney Baptist Church this applies to:

- Creche helpers,
- Sunday School teachers,
- Designated Person,
- Bible Class leaders,
- FBI leaders,
- Youth Club leaders,
- Youth Fellowship Leaders,
- workers in Nursing Home meetings,
- summer activity leaders/helpers, and
- any other activity involving children under 18 or vulnerable adults.

Access NI checks are to be carried out for all leaders and workers aged 16 or over. Access NI checks will be carried out when a person applies for church membership to equip them for the roles they may fill in the future.

***It is a requirement of AccessNI's Code of Practice that all organisations must treat Applicants for Disclosure Certificates who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also requires organisations to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; a copy of which can be given to Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. This document meets that requirement. Our policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders can be found in appendix 3.***

## **Supervision, Support and Training**

Working with children is both worthwhile and fulfilling, but also challenging.

Once appointed, all leaders and workers will be well informed, trained, supervised, and supported, so that they are less likely to become involved in actions which can lead to harm, or can be misunderstood. It is the responsibility of the leader of each activity to monitor the behaviour of all helpers and, by example, encourage good behaviours in their work.

## **Training**

As newcomers, leaders and workers will be made aware of the tasks they will be performing and of Ballymoney Baptist Church's child protection policy, procedures and Code of Behaviour.

Training is a continual process and will include:

- raising awareness in child protection/safeguarding;
- particular skills training with regards teaching children and young people;
- particular skills training with regards dealing with behaviour of children and young people.

## **Supervision and Support of Workers**

It is the Designated Person's responsibility to support workers and the Designated Person should keep them up-to-date with child protection issues and with other policies as they arise.

Workers should feel free to approach the person in charge in order to share anxieties, concerns, or worries, especially about the work in which they are involved. This includes any concerns of a practical nature - transport, health and safety, programme, etc

Supervision and support will take the form of regular visits, e.g. to the Sunday School and other informal discussions as the need arises.

At these visits important issues can be addressed and training needs identified. Training needs will include the development of a worker's particular gift either "on-the-job" or through organised training.

## **Principles of Good Practice**

### **Ministry Guidelines**

The following are some practical guidelines for each of our ministries:

#### **Creche**

Children are welcome in Creche from 0 – 5 years old.

There are 2 helpers in creche who should not be related. Creche helpers may have to assist children using the toilet. Additional help should be sought if the adult : child ratio is breached.

#### **Sunday School/ Bible Class /FBI/Youth Club/Youth Fellowship**

The person in charge must

- make the children aware that the leaders/workers are available to help them;
- make the children and teachers/workers aware of how to behave in the activities,
- and of what the children are to do in event of a fire.

The leaders/workers are expected to follow Ballymoney Baptist Church's Code of Behaviour. This is in place to protect both them and the children.

The person in charge should ensure that access to parental consent forms, children's medical details, and accident/incident report forms is available at every meeting and activity. They should also keep a register of attendance, -a nominated adult teacher/leader should take responsibility for this and it should be available, in case of a fire.

When transporting children to a meeting or other event, the drivers should ensure that they:



- have sufficient motor insurance cover,
- avoid overcrowding a car, and
- avoid being alone with a child in a car.

Junior helpers can be most beneficial in the meetings to help with tasks like giving out sweets and tokens, but they should never be left alone to supervise children or take children to the toilet.

Children/ Young people should not be permitted to leave before the end of the meeting without parental consent.

## Summer Activities

Leaders and workers should follow the guidelines for other activities.

## Transportation

All youth work will involve transporting young people at some stage, whether this is to and from a meeting, other activity or to a residential.

Leaders-in-charge must exercise discretion as to who is permitted to drive cars or mini-buses. The following should always be considered:

- the road-worthiness of vehicles, whether car or bus, is essential when transporting children to and from events. Vehicles should be taxed and MOT'd as required;
- insurance cover must be adequate and up-to-date. Be aware of the limitations of third-party insurance;
- the driver needs to be sufficiently aware of his/her responsibility towards the passengers;
- speed limits should never be exceeded; and
- the driver needs to know what to do in the event of breakdown or accident.

In addition, leaders/workers should observe the guidelines below which will help ensure protection for both them and the young people.

## Private cars

- Seat belts should always be worn by each passenger in a private car and booster seats used for children under 12 years of age.
- A driver must avoid transporting a child or young person on his/her own. The driver should try to ensure that another worker or other children/young people are in the vehicle. If a situation occurs when a driver has to transport a child alone, he/she

should ensure the person in charge/parent knows this is happening, and that the child is in the rear seat.

### **Mini-buses/ buses/ coaches**

- There should only be one child per seat on all mini-buses, buses and coaches with seat belts.
- Seat belts should be worn when provided on the bus. Leaders and workers should try to persuade children to do so for their own safety. A single seat belt must not be used by more than one child, nor should a belt be placed around a child who is on an adult's lap.
- There should be at least two adults supervising children on the bus, who are not related.
- The person driving the minibus must have the appropriate licence to do so and the necessary insurance must be in place.

### **Children must be told their rights**

Children must be told of their rights, especially in relation to their involvement with Ballymoney Baptist Church. The following are the rights which should be shared at meetings, and may be conveyed in the terms provided.

- "You have the right to be safe and so we ask you to obey the rules, which are there for your safety."
- "You have the right to be protected from any harm. Please tell us if you feel, or have been, threatened or abused. We will listen and try to do something about it."
- "You have the right to healthcare; therefore, we need to know if you suffer from any illnesses. Parents should inform leaders on the relevant information form."
- "You have the right to practise your own religion, but as you know, during all our meetings and activities you are expected to listen to Christian views. You have the right afterwards to discuss what you have heard with your teacher without fear of prejudice."
- "You have the right to be treated with dignity, but you are expected to behave in a respectful way and to treat others in the same way with dignity and respect."
- "You have the right to express your opinions. We would encourage you to do so at a time, which is suitable to all involved. This can easily be arranged with your leader/worker."

## Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, leaders and workers will deal with the emergency, notifying an elder as soon as practicable. If it is a fire or health problem, they will ring 999 immediately. If they have to evacuate, the group leader will have access to children's details so parents can be contacted.

Fire extinguishers are available for use if they assist in getting children to safety. They are situated

- beside the front door, and
- in the back hall

Fire Extinguishers are regularly tested by a reputable firm.

The Church conducts regular checks on other equipment including seats, etc. and PAT tests.

## Forms

*Parental Consent Forms* to be completed by parents of all children attending the organisations

*Record of Allegations of Abuse or Suspensions Form* is available from the Designated Person and is to be completed when there is an allegation against a worker or a suspicion of abuse of a child. Give the completed form to the Designated Person. Completed forms are stuck into a hard-back book and kept in a secure place.

*Record of a disclosure of Abuse or Suspensions Form* is available from the Designated Person and is to be completed when a disclosure is made by a child. Give the completed form to the Designated Person. Attach any rough notes you may make at the time of the disclosure.

*Accident/ Incident Record Form* to be completed as soon as possible when an accident/incident occurs. Accidents are recorded in the online accident report book (QR Code for quick access is available in the church kitchen). Inform the Designated Person.

Copies can be found in Appendix 2

## **CONTACT NUMBERS**

### **List of Workers**

Designated Person: Jackie Smith Contact Number: 07578339450

Deputy Designated Person: Derek Boyd Contact Number: 07443 511690

### **Contact Numbers for Relevant Statutory Bodies**

Single Point of Entry (SPOE Team):

0300 1234 333 (028 95049999 –out of hours)

Police 101

### **CONCLUSION**

*The safeguarding and protection of children and young people is an essential part of the pastoral care of the Church. The experiences that children gain from Creche, Sunday School, FBI, Youth Club and Summer activities depend upon relationships of trust between the children/young people and their leaders and workers and from a feeling of security within the church's environment. The area of Child Abuse can be difficult and sensitive and this Policy offers clear procedures for action; draws attention to areas of potential risk and provides guidance to leaders and workers in respecting the rights of children in their care whilst also keeping themselves safe. In making a report on suspected child abuse, a leader/worker, who is acting within the course of his/her responsibility and following the correct procedure, will receive full support from the Elders of the Church*

## **Appendix 1**

*In addition to UNCRC, this Policy is set within the context of:*

- *The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003*
- *Sexual Offences Act 2003*
- *Safeguarding vulnerable groups (NI Order) 2007*
- *Sexual Offences Order (NI) 2008*
- *Safe Guarding Board Act (NI) 2011*

## Appendix 2: Relevant Forms

*Parental Consent Forms* to be completed by parents of all children attending the organisations. The form is available online.

<b>INFORMATION ABOUT PARENT</b>		
Name of Parent:		
Address:		
Contact information for named parent:	Mobile:	
	Other:	
Email:		
If I am unavailable, please contact:	Name:	
	Relationship:	
	Contact Number:	
<p>I will inform the leaders of any changes to my child's health/ medication needs and any changes of address or phone numbers given.</p> <p>In the event of illness of accident, having parental responsibility for the above-named child, I give permission for first aid to be administered where considered necessary by a trained first aider, if available, or by a suitably qualified medical practitioner.</p> <p>If I cannot be contacted and my child should require emergency hospital treatment, I authorise an adult leader to sign on my behalf any written consent required by the hospital. However, I understand that every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible.</p> <p><b><i>During the time your child will spend with us photographs/ video filming may be taken for general purposes and for this we need permission.</i></b></p> <p>By signing this form, I indicate that I have given permission. If I wish to opt out, I will speak to the organisers.</p>		
<p><b>Data Protection</b></p> <p>We collect the above information solely for the organisation, risk management and safety of the children in our care. Your data will be stored securely by Ballymoney Baptist Church and will only be accessed by the head volunteer for the purposes set out above.</p> <p>Failure to provide us with the necessary consent and accurate personal information may affect our ability to run the event efficiently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ I give consent to be informed about next year's Summer activities.</li> <li>✓ I give consent to be informed about all future Ballymoney Baptist Church events.</li> <li>✓ I give consent for my child's data to be stored securely for medical, safeguarding and emergency purposes.</li> </ul> <p>Please contact Alastair Smith, <a href="mailto:info@ballymoneybaptistchurch.org">info@ballymoneybaptistchurch.org</a> if you have any concerns regarding the use and storage of your data.</p> <p>Signature of parent/carer..... Date .....</p> <p>Name printed in full: .....</p>		

<b>INFORMATION ABOUT MY CHILDREN</b>			
Name of 1 <sup>st</sup> Child		Date of Birth	
Please state any relevant medical information concerning your child:			
Any other information regarding special needs or other requirements that would be helpful to leaders?			
Name of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Child		Date of Birth	
Please state any relevant medical information concerning your child:			
Any other information regarding special needs or other requirements that would be helpful to leaders?			
Name of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Child		Date of Birth	
Please state any relevant medical information concerning your child:			
Any other information regarding special needs or other requirements that would be helpful to leaders?			
Name of 4 <sup>th</sup> Child		Date of Birth	
Please state any relevant medical information concerning your child:			
Any other information regarding special needs or other requirements that would be helpful to leaders?			

*Record of Allegations of Abuse or Suspicious Form*

**Record of Child Abuse Allegation against an adult helper/ leader**

<b>Date</b>		
<b>Nature of complaint/Suspicion</b>		
<b>Complaint made by:</b>	<b>Complaint made against :</b>	<b>Complaint made to:</b>
<b>Evidence presented including record of any physical injury:</b>		
<b>Advice and Nature of Advice sought:</b>		
<b>Decision taken:</b>		
<b>Referred to:</b>	<b>Referred by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Outcome including any disciplinary measures:</b>		
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Pastor</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Designated person</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Correspondence attached</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>



Part 1 to be completed by the person raising the concern
Name of Child:
Age: Address: Contact number:
Date: Time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature of concern:
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:
Action taken at the time:
Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:
Any further action taken:
Written report passed to Designated Person Date: Time:

Name of Child.....

[PLEASE FORWARD TO DESIGNATED PERSON WITHOUT DELAY]

Name of Leader/Worker making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Leader/Worker: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2 – to be completed by the Designated / Deputy Designated Person**

Advice sought/conversation with –Church Safeguarding Team, Social Services, Police CPSA Unit,

Date:

Time:

Who:

Advice:

Action as a result of advice –

Who spoken to:

Date:

Time:

What was said and agreed:

Referred to Social Services:

Yes  No

Decision not to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how and when.

Decision to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how, when.

Signed by Designated/ Deputy Designated Person..... Date.....

Signed by Pastor..... Date.....

## Ballymoney Baptist Church Accident Form- online version available

Address: [60 Ballymena Rd, Ballymoney BT53 7EZ](#)

Phone: 028 2766 6452

Email: [info@ballymoneybaptistchurch.org](mailto:info@ballymoneybaptistchurch.org)

Date	/	/	Time	:	Place:								
Child's Name						Age							
Location													
Incident details:													
<b>PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY</b>													
<b>Type of Accident:</b>			<b>Type of Injury</b>				<b>Action taken</b>						
Trip/slip			Bump/Bruise				Parent contacted						
Fall from height			Cut/Graze				Unable to contact parent						
Burn			Nosebleed				First Aid administered, child remains at event						
Contact with allergen			Headache				Child sent home						
Head bump			Head Injury				BBC recommends to parent that child should see a Doctor						
Equipment related			Vomiting/Nausea				Ambulance called						
Struck by vehicle			Dislocated joint				Epipen required						
			Fracture				Inhaler administered						
Other: Please state below			Other: Please state below				Other: Please state below						
<b>PLEASE NOTE INJURY SITE</b>													
<b>HEAD</b>	Right	Left	<b>ARM</b>	Right	Left	<b>TORSO</b>	Right	Left	<b>LEG</b>	Right	Left		
Eye			Shoulder			Chest			Hip				
Ear			Upper Arm			Stomach			Thigh				
Cheek			Elbow			Pelvis			Knee				
Nose			Lower Arm						Shin				
Mouth			Wrist						Ankle				
Teeth			Hand						Foot				
Chin			Fingers						Toe				

### *Appendix 3 Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders*

***It is a requirement of AccessNI's Code of Practice that all organisations must treat Applicants for Disclosure Certificates who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also requires organisations to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; a copy of which can be given to Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. This document meets that requirement.***

1. Ballymoney Baptist Church complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by the Department of Justice, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by AccessNI under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing applicant's suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes. We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

2. This policy is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

3. Ballymoney Baptist Church will request an Access NI Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and **relevant** to the particular position. This will be based on a thorough risk assessment of that position and having considered the relevant legislation which determines whether or not a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is available to the position in question. Where an Access NI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a post or position, all applicants will be made aware at the initial recruitment stage that the position will be subject to a Disclosure and that Ballymoney Baptist Church will require the appropriate Access NI Disclosure check as a condition of appointment

4. In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, Ballymoney Baptist Church will only ask about convictions which are defined as "unspent" within the terms of that Order, unless the nature of the position is such that we are entitled to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record.

5. We undertake to ensure an open and measured and recorded discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned eg. the individual is applying for a driving job but has a criminal history of driving offences. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.

6. We will ensure that all those in Ballymoney Baptist Church who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of Disclosure information. We also ensure that they are familiar with the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders (e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978).

7. We undertake to make every subject of an Access NI Disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice, and to make a copy available on request.

**Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend upon the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.**

## Reporting procedure for Disclosures

If a child comes to you and begins to disclose abuse, these are the guidelines, which should be followed:

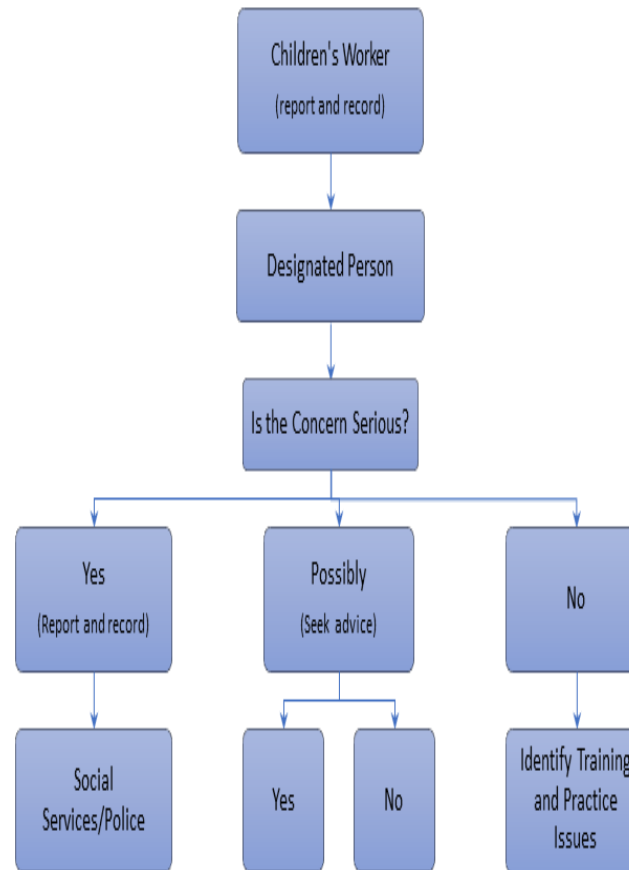
DO	DON'T
Stay <b>calm</b>	Don't panic
Listen <b>and hear</b> – Reassure <b>that he/she has done nothing wrong</b>	Don't ask leading questions e.g. "Did your Dad...?"
Record <b>in writing what as soon as possible</b>	Don't promise to keep secrets
Report sent to Designated Person	Don't inquire into details of abuse
	<b>Don't make a child repeat the story unnecessarily</b>

### Some further help

- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after it has taken place, even if it is information you do not understand fully, or like writing down. It is important - Use the child/ young person's words if possible.
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.
- Remember information must only ever be passed on a "need-to-know" basis. All concerns and disclosures need to remain as confidential as possible.
- If the Designated Person is not available, please contact the Deputy.

## Flow Chart for reporting concerns

Please refer to the full policy for details.



# Ballymoney Baptist Church

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

THE DESIGNATED PERSON

FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS

**JACKIE SMITH**

THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED PERSON

FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS

**DEREK BOYD**

## Procedures

The Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person will work along with a safeguarding team to protect our young people. If you have any concerns you must raise these using the procedures set out in the policy. **It is not your job to investigate.** You should simply gather the facts, record these on the correct forms and pass as soon as is possible to the Designated Person, or in their absence, the Deputy Designated person.

## Confidentiality

It is the policy of Ballymoney Baptist Church to only communicate information of a confidential nature on a 'need to know' basis. All leaders, workers and children must be aware that there are some situations in which confidentiality needs to be broken, specifically, if you are concerned that a person is in danger, either to themselves or from someone else, or if you suspect that an offence may have been committed.

Personal and sensitive details which parents have confided about their children or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.



## Cause for concern

If something gives you cause for concern, there are some things you can do to check your concern:

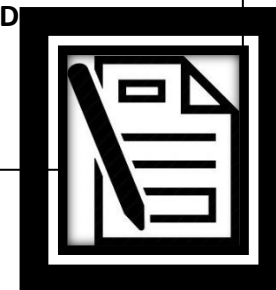
- **Ask the child** - If the child has an injury you could ask, "What happened to you?" or if the child is upset, simply asking, "What's wrong?" is enough to give the child an opportunity to open up; **DO NOT PRY IF THE CHILD IS UNWILLING TO OPEN UP.**
- **Ask other workers** – other workers may have insight into the situation that will immediately put your mind at ease OR reinforce your concern;
- **Ask the parents** –it is possible to ask quite informally, "I noticed she wasn't her usual bubbly self tonight. Is she alright?" Doing so will give the parent an opportunity to put your mind at ease. The parent's response will guide you as to what to do next. Be mindful that the parent may be the cause of the distress.

Remember – **do not investigate. Your responsibility lies in reporting concerns to the Designated Person who will then deal with the matter appropriately**

You **MUST** use the correct form. Ask the designated person for this.

- **Fill in a *Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Form* - try to include as much detail as possible - document the reasons for your concern, e.g. bruising, lethargy, sexual conversation inappropriate to the age of the child, etc.**
- **Give the form to the Designated Person who will contact you to clarify anything they don't understand**
- **Quietly monitor the situation and report any further developments to the Designated Person, making sure these developments are recorded**
- **Do not discuss your concerns openly with other workers unless you think they may be able to shed some light on the situation. Be discreet!**

RECORD RECORD  
RECORD



## Guidelines about Modern Technology

A blanket ban on mobile phones is not necessary as mobiles may be useful in emergencies.

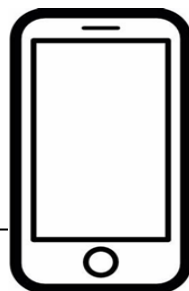
Contacting children and young people by phone, text or email should not be undertaken without parental consent. Workers should not normally make their mobile phone numbers or email addresses available to the children.

The use of obscene images or language on mobile phones is not tolerated and will result in confiscation of the mobile phone and parents being informed.

Photographs, video or other images of children should not be taken without the consent of the parents and children. The purpose for which these images will be used should be made clear.

Ballymoney Baptist Church will take all steps to ensure that these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended.

Photographs, videos and other images of children will not be displayed on the internet without parental consent. Group photographs should be used in preference to individual photographs and avoid naming the children.



## Meeting with individual children (or counselling/guidance)

- Meeting with individual children should take place as openly as possible
- The door should be left open and other leaders/workers informed of the meeting
- Ensure there is another leader/worker on the premises for the duration of the session.
- If counselling/guidance is taking place other than a Church event, then it may be advisable to not go alone. The worker should agree a time and venue and gain parental consent. Choose a public place.

## Guidelines on Bullying

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.

If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with. The needs of the victim are paramount. Incidents of bullying must be investigated and recorded and stopped quickly. In serious cases parents should be informed.

An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour, genuinely apologise and the children will be reconciled. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not occur.

# Ballymoney Baptist Church

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures- Code of Conduct



THE DESIGNATED PERSON

FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS

**JACKIE SMITH**

THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED PERSON

FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS

**DEREK BOYD**

## Code of Behaviour

This code of behaviour is to be used at all times by our leaders and workers.

### General Principles

Workers should give children appropriate time to express their opinions. All children should be valued and respected as individuals and workers should be available to listen to the children whenever necessary.

Workers should always work openly with children and take responsible precautions to ensure that they are not left alone with a child completely unobserved. **Remember you cannot rely upon your good name to protect you.**

Workers should ensure that activities are carefully planned and that children are adequately supervised at all times.

Adults working with children must be exceptionally careful in today's climate not to put themselves in any situation where an allegation of abuse could be made. They must always err on the side of caution. To help avoid placing themselves in a difficult situation the Code of Conduct below has been drawn up.

The code of Conduct is in place to protect everyone.

## All leaders/workers recognise that it does not make sense to:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone in a car on journeys, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents, and someone in charge of the event.
- Take children to your home.

## We should never...

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay - apart from structured sports activities
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Make unnecessary physical contact with children
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child - even in fun
- Let allegations made by a child go without being addressed and recorded
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves
- Form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust
- Use physical punishment or discipline out of anger

## Physical contact with children

- Be mindful of how and where you touch a child - the child must feel comfortable with the contact.
- There may be contact during sports or games, but remember your size and strength, and so restrict your involvement for the safety of the children.
- Physical contact of a comforting and reassuring nature is a valid way of expressing your concern and care. However, *it is only appropriate if it is meeting the need of the child.*
- Physical contact should only ever take place with the consent of the child.

## Protecting children from harming themselves

- Sometimes restraint may need to be applied to a child in order to protect him/her from harming themselves or others, or seriously damaging property. It should never be used to inflict pain or as a general means of control.
- The proper use of restraint requires skill and judgement. Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied. Leaders should never try to restrain a young person on their own. Another leader may act as an assistant or as a witness.
- Remember that restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Following an incident when restraint has been used, a report should be inserted in the Accident/Incident Report form.