

Child Protection Procedures & Guidelines (A summary of essentials of the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service Manual)

Youth work leaders and carers /helpers in the church who are responsible for a particular group or ministry involving young people or vulnerable adults must ensure that the following procedures are followed at all times.

1.

1.1 Youth workers/helpers (18 and over) (“the worker, applicant or carer”) should be advised that unless they have already been checked/vetted and are a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Persons Group Scheme (“PVG”) they will need to apply for membership of the Scheme.

If they are already a Scheme member then their membership will simply need to be updated and a short form is available to enable this to be done. The worker should be advised that a) that they will require to produce evidence of identity and proof of address and b) that a criminal record check will be carried out as part of the vetting procedure and c) that there is a three month probationary period for all applicants in connection with their involvement as workers/helpers carers.

1.2 Application forms are available from a member of the Child Protection Committee (“CP Cttee”) to whom they should be returned duly completed with the originals (and a copy) of the original documentation.

1.3 Once the vetting procedure is complete, a certificate confirming this will be issued to the applicant.

2.1 Important points to bear in mind

Workers should treat all children /young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.

- Consideration should be given whether a male and/or female worker should be involved or more than one worker.
- 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 (eg 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 in large groups

2. 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 an individual 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.

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 raises concerns. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights and action taken. Log books can protect both children and workers.

3. Adult to Child 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 child care up to 16 years of age and early education.

	Adult : Children
0 to 2 years	1 : 3
2 to 3 years	1 : 5
3 and over	1 : 8*
If all children are 8 or over	1 : 10

Two adults to be in attendance at any one time.

*Where children aged 3 and over attend facilities providing day care for a session which is less than a continuous period of four hours in any day the adult: child ratio may be 1 : 10 providing individual children do not attend more than one session per day.

NB. The national care standards for childcare cover services for children and young people up to the age of 16 years which are regulated under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. They apply to activities which last for six days or more, for children up to sixteen years of age where there is no one with parental responsibility with them and where the activity lasts for over two hours 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. .

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 catering for children with disabilities/special needs.

An Accident and Incident Record book

is kept in the main office of the church in an unlocked drawer of the two drawer cabinet kept in the room with the photocopier.

1 Please only record the date of the incident and your name as leader/supervisor along with a note "see separate note in Child Protection Committee file."

2. Please advise a member of the CPCtee of the incident immediately if possible and in any event provide them with a short note of the incident within 24 hours.

4. Church-Based Young Persons Peer Group Activities

Many people are of the opinion that Child Protection issues apply only to younger children. However, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the notes of guidance, makes it clear child protection applies to children and young people up to the age of 18.

Young people can be victims of abuse. Sadly some are perpetrators.

All youth activities should be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with agreed recruitment procedures. Whilst there may be a valid argument for groups of age 16+ to be led and run by their peers, adult leaders should always be in the vicinity and should contribute to any programme reviews and planning. The following points should also be taken into consideration:

- If there are children/young people under 16yrs at an activity, adults 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.

7. Children From the Street

Sometimes children playing outside or wandering the streets with no adult supervision will want to join in with church activities (e.g. children's club, Sunday school) without the knowledge of their parents. CCPAS recommends the following:

On arrival, welcome the child/children and try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number. Record their visit in a register.

- Ask the child/ren if a parent/carer is aware where they are, and what time they are expected home. If this is before the session ends, the child should be encouraged to return home, unless permission to stay can be obtained from the parent/carer via a telephone call. In any event suggest the child seeks the parent/carer's permission to return the following week.
- Link the visiting child with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and show them the ropes.
- On leaving, give the child a leaflet about the group with contact telephone numbers etc and perhaps a standard letter to the parent/carer inviting them to make contact if they wish.
- Without interrogating the child, 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.

8. Working with Disruptive Children

Sometimes children and young people become angry, upset and disruptive. Occasionally their behaviour may endanger themselves or others. The Government has developed national standards in

relation to early years and day care. The following guidelines can be adopted by churches providing services to children and young people.

If a child/young 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 a child/young person is harming him/herself, another person or property then other children/young 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 child/young person to STOP. If your request is ignored, you might need to warn the individual that you will consider calling for additional help, (e.g. Parents / Police) if they do not stop. In exceptional circumstances and with assistance, you might need to restrain the child/young person to prevent them harming themselves, others or property whilst you wait for the parents/police.

Ensure all workers are trained in appropriate restraint techniques and how to diffuse volatile situations. Contact your local Police or Local

Authority Youth and Community Service to see what training is available.

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 child's/young 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.

11. Children With Special Needs.

Churches and organisations need to be aware that children and young people 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 which take into account the needs of these young people

There is therefore a need for extra vigilance recognising that a worker may encounter the following difficulties:

- Children may not fully understand what is said to them, or may not be able to express themselves in ways that can be understood.
- The worker may not possess the appropriate personal communication skills (eg specialised spoken and non-verbal communication such as Makaton signs and symbols, British Sign Language etc).
- It can be hard to know if a child with a disability has been abused because of communication problems.

There are a number of reasons why a child with a disability is more vulnerable to abuse:

- Children with disabilities tend to have more physical contact than those without disabilities (ie therapists, care workers) and may require higher levels of personal care.
- The definition of what constitutes abuse is wider for children with disabilities. (This can include force-feeding, financial abuse, over-medication and segregation).

- Attitudes can play a part - the belief that a child or young person with a disability can't be sexually abused because they are seen as asexual.

The church and other organisations have a pivotal role in empowering those with disabilities by:

- Teaching personal safety skills to those with disabilities. The church can encourage a child with a disability to take some control of his/her body (ie provide sex education and teaching about feelings; that some parts of our body are private and to differentiate between good and bad touches). This is essential to counter the points above.

13. Transporting Children

These guidelines should apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children and young people, organised by or on behalf of your church/organisation. They do not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between parties with parental responsibility.

Our advice on transporting children is as follows:

- Only those who have gone through the church/ organisation recruitment procedures for workers should transport children.
- All drivers should have read the child protection policy of the church/organisation and agree to abide by it.

- Parental consent should be given and all journeys should be carried out with the knowledge of the leadership of the church/organisation.
- Any motor vehicle adapted to carry more than eight passengers for hire or reward is regarded in law as a Public Service Vehicle (PSV). A small bus permit is therefore required for all mini buses used to carry between 6 and 16 passengers. All minibuses used to transport children should therefore have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance, a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.
- If a church uses a mini-bus and the children/young people are asked to make a contribution towards the trip, there is a legal requirement to obtain a Section 9 permit from the Department of the Environment, Transport & The Regions.
- The law no longer permits car drivers who passed their test after 1st January 1997 to drive mini-buses without passing a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) driving test or unless they are driving under a section 19 permit. This does not apply to licence holders who were over 21 years of age in 1997. Check what categories a worker is entitled to drive by examining their driving licence. Whilst there is no law forbidding young or inexperienced drivers from transporting young people, some churches stipulate that they will use legislation relating to minibuses as a guide ie the driver

should be 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.

- The driver should hold a full driving licence, have adequate insurance and the vehicle should be road worthy.
- Having checked drivers, (application form, interview, references etc) it is reasonable to expect that they may be alone with a child for short periods e.g. dropping off the last child. Consideration could be given to dropping off the least vulnerable child last and plan routes accordingly. Two workers in a car does not in itself guarantee protection for a child - there have been incidents where workers have acted abusively together and in this situation a child could be less protected.
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in a car with a child. If 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 the child / young person at a location where there are other adults around. (Remember a child / young person may want to talk to the driver about an abusive situation).
- When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice to insist children stay in the same groups on the out-going and return journey. This will avoid the confusion

over whether a child has been transported home or at worst left behind.

- If travelling in convoy with cars and minibuses, please note that the maximum speed for a minibus is 50 mph on single carriageway roads, 60 mph on dual carriageways, and 70 mph on motorways.
- At collection or dropping off points do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by an appropriate adult.
- It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular child e.g. where there has been a disagreement or where a child / young person has a 'crush' on a driver.
- If parents transport children around e.g. to and from activities, ensure that all are made aware that such arrangements are the responsibility of the parents involved and not the church or organisation.
- CCPAS recommends that when using minibuses for transporting children, seatbelts should be fitted for all passengers. This is compulsory for vehicles registered on or after 1/10/01.
- An additional consent form should be signed by parents/carers attached to the General Information and Consent Form

14. Health & Safety

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 washhand 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 .

Taking care of touching

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.

- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream etc), encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

Guidelines for 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 and is an expression of God's love for an individual. (Hebrews 12:5-12 & Proverbs 22:6)

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the children in your care.

- Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare a child with another, but encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect children to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and resist allowing demanding 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.
- If children are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly.
- **NEVER** smack or hit a child and don't shout. Change voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love, **NEVER** in anger. (Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry you may deal with the situation unwisely.)
- Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property, and make sure the children understand what action will be taken if not kept.

- Every child is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows therefore, each child should be dealt with on an individual basis.

Some children have a tendency to be disruptive in a group. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort.

- Have a disruptive child sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to them.
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take a disruptive child to one side and engage with them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging their strengths.
- 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.
- If a child's behaviour continues to be disruptive despite measures taken above, seek advice and guidance from a leader. (See church policy on Child Protection) (Also see Section 8 of Chapter 6 - page 58)

- Pray with the other workers before the session and take time to debrief before you leave.

First aid kit and contacts

All premises used by children should have a properly equipped first aid kit. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and the designated worker should regularly check the contents. Workers should be encouraged to attend training run by the St. John Ambulance Brigade or the Red Cross etc.

A suggested minimum for a first aid kit:

2 x small wound dressing
1 x large wound dressing
1 x eye pad
4 x triangular bandages
2 x non-stick dressing 5cm x 5 cm
2 x non-stick dressing 10cm x 10cm
1 reel of low allergy adhesive tape
1 pair of scissors (rounded ends)
4 x safety pins
5 x pairs of disposable latex gloves
2 x conforming bandages 6cm
1 x resuscitation shield
20 x wrapped adhesive dressings (plasters)
2 x crepe bandages 5cm
1 x disposable apron
1 x sealed eye wash
1 x emergency aid card
4 x individually wrapped cleaning wipes (non alcoholic)
An accident report book with forms

HIV /AIDS

Good hygiene should always be practised. Disposable latex gloves and an apron should be used when dealing with broken skin, bodily fluids or faeces.

For First Aid Training and advice contact:

St. Andrew's Ambulance Association, 48 Milton Street, Glasgow, G4 0HR. Web: www.firstaid.uk

Residential and day activities

1. Residential Holiday/Camp

Risk Assessment of Group / Children's Activities

Taking care of children who are away from home involves taking responsibility for their well-being at all times, being prepared for every eventuality, and anticipating situations where there is harm and taking steps to minimise the risks.

Before undertaking any activity the church should ensure that 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.

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, calor 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.

Camp Safety

It is the responsibility of the workers to know the whereabouts of every child and young person 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 daily Logs of Camp activities and any significant incidents recorded in a log book.

The supervision ratio of workers to children per age range is as outlined in chapter six page 56.

All children must complete a Health Information and Consent form and no child should be allowed to participate in any activity without the written consent of the parent/carer.

CAMPS & RESIDENTIAL HOLIDAYS HEALTH INFORMATION & CONSENT FORM - Fire Safety

The camp organisers should have a fire safety procedure, which should include the following:

- Everyone on camp should be warned of the danger of fire. If the camp is in a building then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. A fire drill should be practised on the first day of the camp/holiday.
- When using a building as a residential facility ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. It should also comply with fire regulations.

- In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).

8. Electrical Equipment (PAT Testing)

Camp organisers should ensure all equipment has been PAT approved. (PAT stands for Portable Appliance Inspection). Any appliance with a plug attached to it is classed as a portable appliance. A PAT test minimises the risk of potential fire and/or electric shock.

If young people wish to bring electrical equipment with them such as a CD player and they will be running it off mains electricity, measures should be in place to PAT test the equipment, in conjunction with the policies of the residential establishment (e.g. Youth Hostel) where they are staying. Better still, encourage the use of battery operated equipment.

9. First Aid

There should be at least one worker who holds a recognised and valid First Aid Certificate.

The First Aider should ensure that on the camp:

- First Aid boxes are available and their location known.

- That the First Aid kit contains those items recommended by St. Andrew's Ambulance or similar.
- the First Aider should record all accidents and injuries.
- He/she is aware of the name and telephone number of the local GP practice, and the distance and location of the nearest hospital with an A&E Department.
- He/she has access to medical consent forms for all those on the camp.
- Any medication being stored on a child's behalf is kept securely and is always available to the child. (e.g. Don't arrange a trip away from the camp without taking the child's inhaler if they are asthmatic.)

10. Health and Hygiene

Churches/organisations need to familiarise themselves with the regulations under the Food Safety Act (Scotland) 1990 when providing food. The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 states that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must comply with the regulations. It follows therefore that those with responsibility for food should possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc).

11. Adventurous Activities

No child should participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The Camp Organisers should ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996, the Camp Organisers need to ensure that the premises are licensed.

12. Sleeping Arrangements

Arrangements for residential holidays should be considered carefully. It would be unwise for a worker to share sleeping accommodation with 1 or 2 children. In a large dormitory, adults sharing sleeping accommodation with children might be acceptable or on an activity such as youth hostelling where it is customary practice. Look at arrangements which are age-appropriate and provide security for the child and that would be considered safe for children and workers. Ensure parents understand what the arrangements will be.

14. Insurance

It is important for the camp organisers to ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all eventualities such as personal accident (e.g. death or disablement), lost or stolen property and personal liability. If the trip is at a centre it is also important

to establish that there is appropriate Public Liability Insurance.

15. 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 or a copy should be taken by the group leader on the visit. A copy should be retained by the church contact person.

(i) swimming pools

Before any visit to a swimming pool check there will be a qualified lifeguard present at all times and first aid/rescue equipment is readily available including, 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 also be made that the changing rooms are safe and hygienic and there is a changing room for each sex.

It is important children and young people know how to behave in and around water and that they have not eaten for at least half an hour before swimming.

(ii) sea or natural waters

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities. This should only be allowed as a supervised activity, preferably in a recognised bathing area. There must be a qualified lifeguard present at all times. Even with lifeguard cover children and young people 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 ideally hold a relevant life saving award in addition to the lifeguard cover. There should also be an increase in the adult to child ratio.

Churches Child Protection Advisory Guidelines Summary

(revised Aug 2014)