



Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement on children, young people and the church

This statement was agreed at the Annual General Meeting held on 3rd October 2004. It will be read annually at each subsequent Annual general Meeting. Progress in carrying it out will be monitored and noted in the AGM Youth Work Report

As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people.

We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.

We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, and to providing supervision.

The church is committed to following the Home Office Code of Practice '*Safe from Harm*' and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its publication '*Safe to Grow*' (revised edition). From the basis of these documents the church has produced its own '*Child Protection Guidelines*'

Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations of this document, and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a summary copy of the '*Child Protection Guidelines*' and also of this '*Policy Statement*' document

As part of our commitment to children and young people the church has appointed Tim & Sharon Gerry and Brenda Matthews to be their Advocates. Their role will be regularly explained to children, and their names, addresses and phone numbers publicly displayed.

Good Practice Guidelines

1. General Safety

Safety is of prime importance during any activity

Safety is everyone's responsibility

Everyone should be aware of the following guidelines:

- There should be adequate supervision by a leader/helper of all activities
- When using special equipment, such as trampolines, bouncy castles etc, ensure those supervising are adequately trained. Remove/ avoid items which may cause injury
- High risk activities, such as swimming, require written permission from parents/ guardians in advance
- If possible, aim to have a trained first aider present
- Where possible, leaders/ helpers should be aware of any medical requirements that children have. E.g., allergies, current medication etc.
- Be aware of the location of Fire Exits and ensure they remain 'unblocked'. Know where the nearest Fire Extinguishers are located
- During games, be aware of the risks of physical injury and guard against these
- Familiarise yourself with the telephone system of the property
- Keep an accident report book in which to record details of accidents, injuries, witnesses, and ensure it is dated

2. Physical Contact

- Do not make unnecessary physical contact with young people
- Avoid physical contact which may be misconstrued by an observer
- If you think it appropriate, offer comfort and reassurance to a child by placing a hand on the shoulder
- Ensure that you are not left alone with a child for long periods
- Try to remain visible to other leaders/ helpers

It does NOT make sense to:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Take children to your home without the child's parents and the leader of the organisation knowing

Leaders/ helpers should NEVER:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- 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 unchallenged or unrecorded
- Do things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves

3. Discipline

Discipline– What is it?

- It means to train
- It means to correct
- It means self– control
- It means to create order

When disciplining children and young people:

NEVER

- Use force (smack/ hit)

- Discipline out of anger
- Use put downs
- Humiliate them in front of others
- Reject the child– just their behaviour
- Allow some children to take all your attention
- Compare children with each other

ALWAYS

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding
- Pray for or with the child
- Work on each individual child's positive characteristics
- Be a good role model and set a good example
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention
- Be consistent and work together as a team
- Ensure other leaders know what you have said– this avoids manipulation

Concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse

1. What every child needs:

RESPECT	Children's ideas of what is important are very different from yours. Try to remember this when a child wants to tell you something urgently, even if you are busy.
PHYSICAL CARE	This includes warmth, adequate clothing, enough to eat and safety from hazards.
PRAISE	This will help children to grow up to be secure, confident adults.
ATTENTION	Listen to children, not just to their words, but to anything they might be trying to tell you by their behaviour.
TRUST	Make sure that children know that you trust them and that you will always take what they say seriously and seek to help them.
LOVE	This is the most vital need of all.

2. What is child abuse?

There are four main kinds of child abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE	occurs when a child is hurt, kicked, beaten or punched.
NEGLECT	occurs when an adult leaves a child alone, does not give them enough to eat or drink, or does not take them to see a doctor when they are ill.
EMOTIONAL ABUSE	occurs when the adult with responsibility for caring for the child says nasty things to them, and does not have appropriate physical contact with them.

SEXUAL ABUSE occurs when an adult or other young person touches a child's private parts in a way that makes the child feel worried or unhappy. Some adults or other young people who sexually abuse children also ask the child to touch parts of their body or try to show pornographic pictures or videos.

3. What to do if you are concerned about a child

Your responsibility is to report any concern you have about a child and to ensure your concern is taken seriously.

DO'S AND DON'TS

DO

- Stay Calm.
- Listen and Hear.
- Give time to the child to say what they want.
- Reassure them that they are doing the right thing in talking.
- Write down what was said to you.
- Tell the leader in charge of the organisation– use the flowchart below.
- Keep a note of your report. Give the date, time, name of the individual you have told and the action agreed.

DON'T

- Panic.
- Make a child repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Promise to keep secrets.
- Enquire into details of the abuse yourself.
- Attempt to deal with the problem alone.

Procedure for when you suspect a child is being abused

