



## Quorn Baptist Church

# Code of Practice Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Young People

## 1 Definitions

In this document children means primary school age or younger; young people means secondary school age but under 18 and vulnerable young adult means a young person over 18 but classified as having special needs. The Guidelines apply to all categories, unless specifically stated.

## 2 Consent and Supervision

- a) Contact/consent forms (Appendix V) shall be obtained<sup>1</sup> and shall be available to leaders during all group sessions. These forms should be stored securely and retained as long as the child or young person is part of the Group. Forms should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated annually.
- b) For all groups where children and young people are without parental or carer supervision<sup>2</sup> a register of children or young people attending each session and the workers present should be kept.
  - i. For primary school age children, the name(s) of the person(s) picking up the child at the end of the activity should be obtained if they are not remaining on site.
  - ii. This should record times of arrival and departure of any individuals who are not attending the whole session.
  - iii. Any other people present in the part of the building being used for children's activities should also be recorded.
  - iv. Registers for each group should record any unusual events (e.g. particularly accidents, disruptive behaviour, fights, or allegations of incidents occurring between children) which take place – with full details being recorded in relevant First Aid/Accident books or reported using the standard incident report form (Appendix I c). These are kept with the First Aid kit in the Church Hall. Any Safeguarding incidents or allegations should be recorded and reported as described in paragraph 12.
  - v. Registers should be renewed annually and completed registers will be stored according to our GDPR and Data Retention Policy

## 3 Leaders and helpers

The Church requires and works to ensure that:

- a) At no time will one adult be alone on Church premises with a child or young person.
- b) As far as possible an adult will not be alone with a young person or persons where their activity cannot be seen. On Church premises, this may mean leaving doors open, or having two groups working in the same room.
- c) There is a suitable ratio of adults to young people. As far as possible each group will be staffed by a minimum of one responsible adult and a nominated helper.
- d) As far as possible there will always be a female adult on site. Consideration will always be given to the appropriate gender balance amongst adults in relation to the young people in groups.
- e) All those who are regularly involved with the children and young people have a current (ie less than 5 years old), enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.
- f) Wherever possible there is a three-year age gap between a leader and the young people they are supporting.

## 4 Young leaders under 18 years of age

In law young leaders under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. The Church therefore requires and works to ensure that:

- a) Training and mentoring is given to ensure that the young leader is helped to develop and hone skills, attitudes and experience.
- b) A young leader is closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of children.
- c) The Safeguarding Policy applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person.  
If the young leader accompanies a group on a residential activity, it is best practice for them to have separate sleeping accommodation to both the adult leadership team and the children they are working with. This should be adhered to whenever possible. If it is not possible an arrangement needs to be agreed that best promotes privacy and safety for all parties.

<sup>1</sup> It may be impractical for consent forms to be obtained before the first attendance but they should be in place by at least the third visit of a child or young person to a group. This requirement does not apply to First Steps, where children remain under the supervision of their carers at all times.

<sup>2</sup> Supervision is defined as the Parent or Carer attending the activity and retaining direct responsibility for their child.

## 5 Premises and equipment

The Church requires and works to ensure that:

- a) Access and movement around the building is safe and well lit.
- b) Equipment used is age appropriate and in safe condition.
- c) Children and young people are not given access to Church premises unless responsible adults are present.
- d) Main entrances are locked<sup>1</sup> or monitored during meetings involving children and young people, to ensure that only people with a *bona fide* reason are on the premises when children's activities are taking place.
- e) Adults do not enter into the toilet lobby when it is being used by a child or young person (unless that adult is a leader who is legitimately assisting a young child - see clause 8 a).
- f) All activities take into account relevant Church health and safety guidelines and food safety procedures.
- g) The playing area for any physical activities (at church or other venues) is checked for any hazards.

## 6 Off-site and overnight activities

The Church requires and works to ensure that:

- a) Parents or carers are provided with relevant information and appropriate consent and medical forms are obtained (Appendix VI).
- b) Emergency contact and medical information is taken by leaders on off-site activities.
- c) Adults sleep in an area separate from children and young people.
- d) All sleeping and changing arrangements are separated by gender.

## 7 Transport

The Church requires and works to ensure that:

- a) Written parental or carer permission is obtained to provide transport for under 16's (Appendix V). Wherever possible an adult should not be alone in a car with a child or young person. If this is unavoidable another leader should be aware of the situation and it should not become a pattern, e.g.. by dropping off the same person last on each journey. Wherever possible the child/young person should be in the back.
- b) Leaders should not spend unnecessary time alone in a vehicle with a child or young person – long conversations outside Church or home, or unnecessary deviations should be avoided.
- c) Drivers are appropriately insured (ie covering voluntary work)
- d) Drivers are particularly mindful of safe driving practices.

## 8 Personal pastoral care including one to one support

The Church requires and works to ensure that:

- a) As far as possible, a leader giving personal pastoral support should be the same sex as the young person.
- b) Even where privacy and confidentiality are important, that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. This person should check if any follow up is necessary.
- c) Another adult will be in the building and the young person should know that they are there.
- d) An agreed time limit is set prior to the interview and followed. It is the responsibility of the adult involved to set this ground rule and to end the session at the designated time. Another appointed time should be arranged to continue, if necessary.
- e) The leader will make the young person aware of their duty of disclosure in the event that any safeguarding or criminal issues arise.

## 9 Responsibilities of leaders and helpers

**The adult leader or helper should:**

- a) Treat all the children and young people with respect and dignity.
- b) Use age-appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of their own body language and the effect they are having on the young person.
- c) Listen well. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said, observing the body language to understand better.

**The adult leader or helper will not**

- a) Engage in any of the following:
  - i. Invading the privacy of young people e.g. when they are using the toilet or showering (assisting a very young child is expected but the adult must be visible).
  - ii. Rough games or sexually provocative games.

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<sup>1</sup> Some doors may be locked in a way that prevents entrance from the outside, but it is easy to open from inside in case of an emergency

- iii. Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in 'fun'.
- iv. Inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form
- v. Any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.
- vi. Any physical punishment of a child or young person.
- b) Let children or young people involve themselves in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- c) Become romantically involved with a member of the group.
- d) Invite a child or young person to their home alone. Instead, invite a group **and / or** ensure that another adult is in the house and make sure that parents or another leader know where the young person is.

## 10 Electronic communication

With regard to electronic communication with children and young people, adult leaders and helpers **must not**:

- a) Use email or mobile phones to communicate unless parental or carer consent has been obtained (Appendix V).
- b) Communicate directly with children of primary school age.
- c) Use electronic communication before 8.00 am or after 10.00 pm, except in the case of emergencies.
- d) Use their personal social networking site(s) or other forms of "closed messaging".
- e) Engage in one-to-one conversations with a child or young person except in the case of emergencies.

Adult leaders and helpers **should**:

- a) Use electronic communication only for information giving purposes to the whole group. If a "conversation" develops another leader should be copied in so that it is not a secret one-to-one conversation.
- b) Use clear and unambiguous language.
- c) Not share or request any personal information other than that which is necessary or appropriate as part of their role.
- d) Save any significant and unavoidable conversations (e.g. arising from a crisis situation), or other messages they are concerned about, as a printed text file, authenticated by another leader and retained with an incident report.
- f) Ensure that the content of any group social networking site is appropriate and check at least once a week the material and photographs uploaded by members of the group.

## 11 Relationships between leaders and helpers

- a) Leaders and helpers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows everyone to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
- b) If they see another leader or helper acting in ways that could be misconstrued, they should speak to the individual concerned or to the group leader or to the Designated Person about their concerns.

## 12 Incident Recording and Reporting

If any safeguarding concerns are raised, disclosures made or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a hand-written record must be made as soon as possible, on a standard incident report form (Appendix 1c). Where possible, this should include an exact record of what the child has said, using their own words. The concern must be reported to the DPS (or their nominee), within 24 hours of the Leader or Helper becoming aware of the concern, following the procedure outlined in Appendix I. If a child or young person is considered to be in imminent danger of harm, then the police should be informed immediately by calling 999. Standard report forms are available in the Church Hall with the First Aid kit and Log Book. Incident reports must be kept confidential and stored according to our GDPR and Data Storage Policy

**All adults and helpers working with children and young people are required to abide by this Code of Practice and to confirm their acceptance and understanding by replying to the Designated Person in writing or by email.**

### Appendices to the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice

- I Procedure for reporting suspected abuse:
  - I a) Procedure for responding to concerns flow chart
  - I b) EMBA flow chart including Designated Person and named contacts
  - I c) Incident report form.
- II Application form for volunteers
- III References form
- IV Purpose statement and declaration of faith
- V Consent and medical forms for regular groups
- VI Consent and medical form for overnight activities