

Guidelines on Child Protection

2009



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Guidelines on Child Protection for Battle Baptist Church

This page contains a summary of Home Office Guidelines regarding Child Protection. Battle Baptist Church is now implementing these guidelines.

Safe from Harm: Summary of Recommendations
(Pub: Home 0111cc, London 1993, ISBN 0862529 93-X)

In order to safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in their charge, voluntary organisations should consider the issues raised by each of the following statements of principle and then, if they wish to do so, take any action which they deem to be appropriate in the light of their circumstances and structures, and the nature of their activities.

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
2. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
3. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.
4. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.
5. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
6. Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
7. Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
8. Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicants paid work or volunteering with children.
9. Explore, all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
10. Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.
11. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
12. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.
13. Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.

Policy Statement

Battle Baptist Church

Policy statement on children, young people and the church

This statement was agreed at the Annual General Meeting held in April 2007.

It will be presented annually at the Annual General Meeting where progress in carrying it out will be monitored.

- As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.
- We recognise that our work with children and young people is not just the concern of those who work regularly with them but of every member of the church.
- The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people, and to providing supervision.
- It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- 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 booklet Safe to Grow. This will include that every adult who works with our children and young people should have a CRB check.
- Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations, and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the church's agreed procedures and Good Practice guidelines.
- As part of our commitment to children and young people, the church has appointed Mrs. Jo Garlick and Mr. John Southam to be their Advocate(s). Their role will be regularly explained to children, and their names(s), address(es) and phone number(s) publicly displayed.

Children and young people are part of (or belong to) our church today. They have much to give as well as to receive. We will listen to them. As we nurture them in worship, learning, and in community life, we will respect the wishes and feelings of children and young people.

Good practice guidelines for the prevention of abuse.

A. Good practice with children and young people

1. *The church should ensure that:*

- As far as possible there should be more than one adult leader present with a group of young people. Ideally the leaders should represent both genders, but where the young people are of a single gender group, then both leaders may be of the same gender.
- A worker should not be alone with a single child.

In a counselling situation with a young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. Ideally, another adult should be in the building, and the young person should know they are there.

- Ensure that access to the building is safe and well-lit.
- All adults regularly working with or alongside children should be required to have a CRB Enhanced disclosure, a record of which will be held in the church office.

2. *You, the worker, should:*

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; watch language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.
- Not engage in any of the following:
 - invading the privacy of children when they are showering or toileting;
 - rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
 - making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in 'fun';
 - inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form;
 - any scapegoating, ridiculing, or rejecting a child or young person.
- Learn to control and discipline children without using physical punishment.
- Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed.
- Not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Not invite a child or young person to your home alone; invite a group, or ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.
- Not give lifts to children or young people on their own. If there is absolutely no alternative to this, ask them to sit in the rear of the car. *(see our Church Transport Policy)
- Not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people if you take a group away.

B. Good practice with colleagues.

Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour. If you see another member of staff acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to your supervisor about your concerns.

~ These measures will also protect workers from false accusation.

C: Good practice in supervision (FOR TEAM LEADERS)

- Meet with workers regularly to review and plan the work.
- Ask about working and personal relationships with the children.
- Take or create opportunities for observing the worker with the children.
- Ideally keep a brief written record of the facts of each meeting and anything of note which you observed

If the supervisor has any doubts about the worker's relationships, he or she should explore further by talking with him or her, then confidentially with other workers, and with the child concerned. The issue should not be dropped until the leader is sure there is no possibility of abuse.

Watch for any child receiving exceptional treatment, being highly favoured or treated unduly harshly.

If abuse is disclosed or discovered:

- Do not delay.
- Do not act alone.
- Do not start to investigate.
- **Consult with the person to whom you are responsible, Mr Neil Erskine or one of the Children's Advocates within the church. If neither is available, in an absolute emergency.....**

if the child is in immediate danger, call the police ~ dial 999.

If appropriate contact Social Service (Out of Hours ~ 01273 814194)

During office hours contact staff at the Old Court House Battle ~ 01424 775599

The person to speak to is:.....

Procedures if abuse is disclosed or discovered.

The church and all its appointed children's and youth workers are committed to the protection of children from physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

Types of abuse

Physical	where children's bodies are hurt or injured.
Emotional	where children don't receive love and affection, may be frightened by threats or taunts, or are given responsibilities beyond their years.
Sexual	where adults (and sometimes other children) use children to satisfy sexual desires.
Neglect	where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

Signs of abuse

The following *may* indicate abuse, but do not jump to conclusions. There could be other explanations.

Physical	unexplained or hidden injuries, lack of medical attention.
Emotional	reverting to younger behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, attention-seeking, running away, stealing, lying.
Sexual	preoccupation with sexual matters evident in words, play, drawings; being sexually provocative with adults; disturbed sleep, nightmares, bedwetting; secretive relationships with adults or children; tummy pains with no apparent cause.
Neglect	looking ill-cared for and unhappy, being withdrawn or aggressive, having lingering injuries or health problems.

If abuse is disclosed or discovered:

- Do not delay.
- Do not act alone.
- Do not start to investigate.
- Consult with the person to whom you are responsible, with Neil Erskine or the Children's Advocate within your church.

If neither is available, in an emergency.....

if the child is in immediate danger, call the police ~ dial 999.

If appropriate contact Social Service (Out of Hours ~ 01273 814194)

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The person to speak to is:.....

What to do if a child tells about abuse

The following is a summary only, for reference. It is no substitute for training.

- Look at the child directly.
- Accept what the child says.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened.
- Tell the child they are not to blame.
- Do not press for information.
- Reassure the child they are right to tell and you and take what they say very seriously.
- Let them know what you are going to do next, who you are going to tell and why, and roughly what will happen.
- Finish on a positive note.
- As soon as possible afterwards, make hand-written notes of exactly what the child said and the date and time.

What will happen next?

The process of professional involvement in cases of child sexual abuse will usually follow this course:

1. A strategy discussion involving Social Services, Police Child Protection team, other significant professionals and the person suspecting abuse or to whom the child had talked.
2. A decision will be taken as to whether an investigation is warranted; if so, it will then be planned.
3. The investigation may include:
 - an informal talk with the child;
 - a formal police (+1- social services) video recorded interview following disclosure;
 - medical examination;
 - preliminary family assessment.
4. If there is sufficient concern, a child protection conference will be held to decide the best course of action to protect the child and help the family. There may be criminal prosecution of the abuser.

Form A: Volunteer helpers form - for under 18's

Volunteer helpers form for work with children and young people for people under 18 years of age

Battle Baptist Church and all its appointed children's and youth workers are committed to the protection of children from physical, sexual or emotional abuse. It is vital that you read and understand the following information before you sign and return the declaration.

Types of abuse

Physical	where children's bodies are hurt or injured.
Emotional	where children don't receive love and affection, may be frightened by threats or taunts, or are given responsibilities beyond their years.
Sexual	where adults (and sometimes other children) use children to satisfy sexual desires.
Neglect	where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

If a child or young person begins to tell you about abuse it is vital that you do the following:

1. **Never promise to keep it a secret** and not tell anyone.
2. Listen carefully but **do not** ask questions.
3. **Reassure them** that they have done the right thing to tell someone.
4. **Pass the information on** to your group leader or the Church Advocate.
5. Write down as soon as possible what you have been told in the child's own words.

At any time once they begin to talk you may want to encourage them to come with you to talk to an adult leader. If they don't want to, remember all you have to do is listen and then pass the information on.

Please note that what has been disclosed is very confidential and should only be shared with others on "a need to know" basis. The first person to be told may eventually be required to make a statement to the Police.

After telling of abuse the child or young person can be very distressed, frightened and worried about what may happen next. They should be reassured that they have done the right thing and not left on their own.

.....

Child Protection Declaration.

I declare that I have read and understood the Child Protection Information and agree to abide by the procedure laid down.

Signed Date

Full name

Policy documents relating to Youth Work.

1. Confidentiality Policy.

Nothing of what takes place or is said between the youth leaders and the young people will be divulged by the leaders without your explicit instruction or agreement to anyone other than the youth leaders team within the Church. If, however, it becomes apparent that you intend to cause serious harm to yourself or others or engage in serious criminal offences we may have to break confidentiality having informed you of our intention to do so.

2. Transport Policy.

Matters relating to transporting children away from Church premises, particularly when cars or minibus is being driven by leaders, parents etc.

- All drivers who are carrying young people on behalf of the Church should confirm that they are properly insured and will drive in a manner that conforms to the Highway Code and relevant Traffic rules and regulations. Drivers will be asked to sign a form to this effect.
- It would not normally be permissible for any driver who has less than three years driving experience to carry young people on any Church activity.
- Vehicles should never carry more passengers than they are designed to carry and all passengers should be expected to wear the seat belts provided at all times.
- Arrangements should be made to ensure that no driver is ever placed in a position where they are asked to carry just one child or young person in their vehicle, no matter how short the journey.

3. Battle Baptist Church Caterpillar Pre-school

It is noted that the Pre-school Management committee have adopted a Child Protection Policy that can be read in conjunction with this policy document. By adopting & integrating both the Church Child Protection Policy and their own policy they have ensured that best practise specific to the needs of the children in their care are adopted at all times.

4. Battle Baptist Football Club

It is noted that the Football Club Management committee have adopted a Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and a Child Protection Policy that can be read in conjunction with this policy document. By adopting both the Child Protection Policy for Battle Baptist Church and their own policy they have ensured that best practise specific to the needs of the children in their care are adopted at all times.

5. Health & Safety Policy

This document obviously applies to all church activity and should be observed at all times.