

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Contents

1. A Code of Practice
2. Principles of Good Practice
3. General Guidelines for Youth Leaders
4. Self Protection Guidelines for Leaders
5. Guidelines in General Safety
6. Guidelines on Transport
7. Residential Programmes
8. Child Protection Committee

Appendix 1 Parental Consent Form

Appendix 2 Application Form for Leaders/Workers

Appendix 3 Referee Information

Appendix 4 Declaration

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Section 1: A Code of Practice for all adults working with children and young people in Antrim Baptist Church

Antrim Baptist Church organises and is responsible for several youth groupings. The Church is committed to providing a safe environment in which children and young people in each of our youth groups can feel secure in relationships with caring Christian Leaders.

We will:

Treat children and young people with dignity.

Value each child and young person and recognise the unique contribution that they each can make.

Provide an example we wish others to follow.

Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.

Use appropriate language with children and young people.

Be aware that someone else might misinterpret our actions, no matter how well intentioned.

Recognise that special caution is required in sensitive moments of counselling, such as dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.

Endeavour to plan activities which involve more than one person.

Never jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.

Never allow ourselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking situations such as tantrums and crushes.

Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.

Ensure that at least two adults are present at all times in any situation where children and young people are in our care.

If you suspect a child or young person is being abused emotionally, physically or sexually:

In the first instance tell the person to whom you are responsible.

Record any facts which support your suspicions.

DO NOT take any action by yourself.

If a child or young person tells you about any type of abuse:

Let them know that you will need to tell someone else; DO NOT promise confidentiality.

Act immediately by consulting with the person to whom you are responsible i.e. the leader of your Organisation or other Office Bearer.

Record the facts as you know them.

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Child Abuse Awareness

Team members must be prepared to listen, and be ready for the occasion when more serious matters may be disclosed. There may also be times when team members have cause to be concerned for the safety of children. Abuse and neglect are increasingly recognised as problems, and our position as workers with children means we have a duty to protect them from harm.

What is child abuse? Child abuse falls into four categories:

Physical Abuse: When a carer deliberately inflicts injury on a child.

Sexual Abuse: When an older child or adult uses a child for their own sexual gratification.

Neglect: When a child, over a period of time, does not have his needs met. All children need; love, protection, security, food, warmth, education and physical care.

Emotional Abuse: This covers a wide range of verbal ill-treatment and neglect.

How might child abuse come to your notice?

1. You may notice signs of physical abuse.
2. A child may behave in a sexually explicit way, inappropriate for their age.
3. You may notice signs of neglect.
4. You may be told of abuse or neglect.
5. Occasionally abuse may involve a team member or older child as the perpetrator.

How should you as Team Leader respond?

It is not your responsibility to investigate allegations or suspicions of abuse. Your role is to pass on to the relevant authority the information you have received, ensuring that at no time a child in need of help is ignored. The guidelines for team members instruct them to inform you immediately about any fears they have or disclosures made to them. The following is meant as a help to you as you handle the situation. There are no guidelines to fit every circumstance.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

1. Be calm and sensitive to the specific situation.
2. Ensure that a written record is made, as it may be needed at a future date. Any written record should be treated in the *strictest possible confidence* and very carefully looked after. It should include details of the child (name, date of birth, address), of the concerns (disclosures, signs or concerns of abuse) of the person to whom the concerns became apparent, and of the date and place. This record should be shown *only* to the police or Social Services, and filed with the Child Protection Committee as soon as possible.
3. Try to identify which of the following apply to the situation
 - a) The matter is already known and being dealt with appropriately. In this case no further action is necessary.
 - b) The matter is not known or being dealt with, and in your opinion is of sufficient gravity to pose a threat to the child's safety. In that case inform either Social Services or NSPCC (see Appendix 5), and the Child Protection Committee.

N.B. if your location is not the area in which the child lives, it would be best to contact the Social Services or NSPCC in the child's home area for advice.

If the child is being abused by someone other than parents or family, the parents should be informed of events, and it is the Church's duty to report this to the appropriate authorities.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 2: Principles of Good Practice

A number of principles of good practice for the protection of children have been identified by child care professionals and voluntary organisations. These principles of good practice state simply and clearly that all voluntary organisations working with children should:

1. Promote the general welfare, health and development of children and strive to protect them from abuse of all kinds.
2. Recognise that children have rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect.
3. Raise awareness of the abuses from which children should be protected.
4. Adopt and consistently apply a clearly defined method of recruiting, assessing and selecting staff and volunteers.
5. Recognise that all workers, voluntary or paid, have rights and treat them with dignity and respect.
6. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise opportunities for children to suffer harm.
7. Develop effective procedures for dealing with accidents and complaints and alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.
8. Establish links with parents and other relevant organisations.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 3: General Guidelines for Youth Leaders/Workers

1. At all meetings of the organisation the leader in charge should ensure that all leaders are aware of the specifics of the programme and are clear about another's delivery of them.
2. Parents should be supplied with the name and telephone number of the leader in charge of the organisation.
3. Periodically throughout the year the leaders of the organisation should review their work against the church's child protection policy.
4. Ensure that there is a contact address and telephone number for each child or young person who regularly attends the organisation. Leaders should endeavour to ascertain any special needs of a child.
5. Arrange programmes which are planned well in advance.
6. Use appropriate language with children and young people.
7. At the commencement of the session all organisations must prepare a written code of conduct with the participation of the members. The leaders must enforce this code with an agreed appropriate level of discipline. A copy of this should be lodged with the child protection committee.
8. Leaders should treat all young people with respect and dignity.
9. All information recorded relating to young people e.g. parental consent forms must be kept confidential.
10. All organisations must meet the following ratio of leaders to children or young people. Only under exceptional circumstances must the ratios be exceeded.

0-2 years	1 leader to 3 children
2-3 years	1 leader to 4 children
4-7 years	1 leader to 8 children
7 & over	1 leader to 20 children

Please note that helpers under the age of 18 *do not* count towards this ratio and must never be expected to assume the same responsibility as an adult leader.

11. Leaders in charge should be aware that they cannot appoint leaders, (although they may approach people to serve in that capacity). The procedure for appointing leaders is outlined in section 8.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 4: Self Protection Guidelines for Leaders

Do's

1. Have an appropriate mix of male and female leaders.
2. As far as possible ensure that leaders are not left alone in a closed room, particularly a sleeping area or bathroom, with a child or young person. Either have another leader present, or keep the door open and inform the leaders where you are, why you are there and who is with you.
3. In many activities, particularly those which are more informal, a lot of "banter" may take place between children/young people and leaders. Where this happens it is important that the leaders are sure that:

The child or young person enjoys it, feels it is fun, but still feels respected.

The child or young person does not feel threatened, intimidated or scapegoat by it.

It is appropriate banter – not nasty or highlighting areas that the child or young person may feel are their weaknesses.

It does not have the potential for other children to use it in an inappropriate or hurtful way e.g. where it turns into taunting or name calling.

4. Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
5. Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
6. Recognise that special caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.
7. Plan activities which involve more than one other person being present, or at least which are within sight or hearing of others.
8. Use your common sense.
9. Where a child or young person makes an allegation or a disclosure of child abuse this must be reported to the leader in charge who will then take appropriate action.
10. Where possible organisations should record the names of the young people at the beginning of each meeting of the organisation so that in the event of a fire/evacuation all can be accounted for.
11. All leaders must be aware of the locations of the fire exits and extinguishers and the locations from where the fire alarms can be activated.
12. Fire exits must never be obstructed.
13. Leaders should draw up an evacuation procedure for their organisation so that each leader knows their responsibilities, a check is made(where possible) to ensure that no children have been left behind and that all leaders and children where to assemble so that all can be accounted for.
14. Occasional fire drills should be conducted. A record of when these were carried out should be kept.
15. All leaders should be aware of the location of first aid boxes.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Don'ts

1. Do not engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay, wrestling, tickling etc.
2. Do not permit abusive youth peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying etc.
3. Leader involvement in some physical contact games is inappropriate and caution should always be exercised with all similar activities.
4. Do not believe "it could never happen to me".
5. Do not make suggestive remarks or gestures even in fun.
6. Do not allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes.
7. Do not rely on your good name to protect you.
8. Do not allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any sort.
9. Do not allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
10. Do not do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
11. Whenever possible avoid taking young children or young people alone in a car on journeys, however short. Try to ensure that another leader or other children/young people are with you. If a situation arises that you have to transport a child home, ensure that other leader know what is happening and that the child is in the rear seats.
12. It may sometimes be necessary for leaders to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full knowledge and consent of parents. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be kept fully informed.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 5: Guidelines in General Safety

Safety is of prime importance during any activity. It is not only the responsibility of the leader in charge but of every worker. You should be aware of the following guidelines:

1. Always have a quick initial look around the premises you are about to use to identify any possible dangers e.g. a stack of chairs which could topple, an electric cable which could trip etc.
2. Be aware of the location of fire exits and ensure that they are not obstructed. Occasional fire drills should be conducted to ensure that all young people know what evacuation procedure to follow in the event of a real fire. Know where the nearest fire extinguishers are located. In the event of a fire, evacuating the building and saving life is much more important than fighting a fire.
3. Know where the nearest accessible telephone is. A telephone should, where possible, be installed on the premises for safety purposes.
4. If at all possible it is helpful to have someone with a First Aid qualification. Where possible workers should be aware of what medication children are currently taking and this should not be given without written consent from parents or doctors. Workers should also seek to obtain information concerning allergies and reaction to foods e.g. peanuts. Medication should be clearly marked, out of the reach of children, and securely locked away.
5. Young people should be supervised at all times by a worker while in a kitchen area.
6. There should be adequate supervision by a worker of certain equipment e.g. table tennis tables, snooker tables etc.
7. During games or “icebreakers” be aware of the risks of physical injury and guard against these.
8. When using special equipment for your programme e.g. for “one of” activities such as trampolining, bouncy castle etc, ensure there is adequate supervision by trained workers. You may also require special insurance to cover these higher risk activities. Be aware of the physical environment and remove/avoid items which may cause injury during the said activity.

If the organisation is undertaking what is deemed to be high risk activities the leaders/helpers must seek written permission from parents/guardians in advance.

9. Areas where maintenance work is taking place should never be used.
10. Know where the accident report book is kept in which you should record details of accidents/injuries/witnesses/date.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 6: Guidelines on Transport

1. Private cars
 - a) Drivers must be insured to drive the vehicle.
 - b) Cars must not be overcrowded as insurance cover will be invalidated. (one child per seat-belt).
 - c) Seat-belts must be worn at all times.
 - d) Leaders cannot charge for transporting children or their insurance will be invalidated. (Note that a contribution by the organisation to cover petrol costs is acceptable).
2. Minibuses/Buses.

Ulsterbus is to be used except in extenuating circumstances.
3. Always ensure that you are not alone in your car with a child. If this is not possible when leaving a child home inform another leader of where you are going and have the child sitting in the rear seats.
4. If travelling in groups ensure each leader knows which children they are responsible for and vice versa.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 7: Residential Programmes

Residential programmes often become the highlight of any organisation's youth programme. Whilst recognising the tremendous impact residential trips can have on a young person's emotional, physical and spiritual development the leader in charge should note the following:

The Residential Centre

1. The Centre must have adequate insurance cover regarding your group and the activities your group hopes to engage in. Insurance should especially cover high risk activities e.g. canoeing, rock climbing etc.
2. The Centre should inform you of its rules and regulations. Make every effort to be aware of its timetable e.g. whether it has a lights out time, meal times, what time it expects the group to arrive and to depart.
3. The Centre must provide access to First Aid/GP in the event of an emergency.
4. The Centre must also provide separate sleeping accommodation for males/females.
5. Parental (or guardian's) consent is essential when taking any young person away as part of a residential programme. A parental consent form (appendix 1) must be signed by the parent/guardian and it should also give any relevant medical information e.g. allergies, special diets etc.
6. Before taking a group away, ensure that parents/guardians are aware of the following:

The programme/activities their child is encouraged/expected to participate in.

The names and numbers of leaders/helpers accompanying the group. (Where possible it is advisable to arrange a pre-residential briefing for the parents, giving information and allowing the parents an opportunity to meet the leaders /helpers).

The Centre telephone number and address.

What basic rules the young people will be asked to abide by, and possible consequences if these are broken.

What clothes and other items the young people might be expected to need.

How much pocket money might be sufficient (it is advisable to set a limit on this)

7. They must have parental/guardian consent to participate in the residential and its activities.
8. They should be fully informed of the nature of the residential, i.e. what is expected from them.
9. They should never be coerced/forced into any activity with which they are uncomfortable.
10. They may be allowed to help formulate rules and a contract for behaviour and will be made aware of sanctions in the event of them being broken.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Using Church Halls for Accommodation

If church halls are being used for accommodation certain factors need to be taken into consideration:

11. In the interest of fire safety ground floor accommodation is considered preferable for sleeping.
12. There must be appropriate male/female segregation and supervision.
13. There should be at least two separate routes leading from the sleeping accommodation and out of the building. A room with two exit doors leading into a corridor from which the only exit could be impeded with smoke and fire could not be considered acceptable.
14. Doors should be checked for ease of opening in an emergency. Exits should be clearly marked, unblocked and pointed out. Clear instructions in the event of a fire should be given to both young people and leaders/helpers.
15. Portable heating appliances should not impede exits and should be turned off during sleeping hours.
16. Leaders/helpers should have torches in case of power failure.
17. There should be a “no smoking” rule applied to the premises.
18. If there is a telephone in the church the leaders/helpers should have access to it. If not, they should be aware of the nearest telephone.
19. Leaders/helpers should avoid staying on their own with a young person. Always be sure that there are other leaders/helpers or young people present.
20. Sleeping accommodation for leaders/helpers and young people, where possible, should be separate, but the young people’s accommodation ought to be easily accessible.
21. A roll of occupants should be prepared and placed just within the exit door. Occupants should be instructed to meet at a pre-determined assembly point in the event of an outbreak of fire and a roll call should be taken.
22. Do not park cars where they would obstruct exit routes or access for fire appliances.

Antrim Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

Section 8: Child Protection Committee

The CPC exists to monitor the Child Protection Policy, assess risks and to aid the church in the appointment of youth workers.

Structure to be made up of:

- 1 x elder
- 1 x female church member
- 1 x male church member

The committee will be appointed by recommendation of the oversight to a church meeting and serve for a period of 4 years and will be immediately eligible for re-election.

Procedure for the appointment of Youth Workers.

1. The Committee will review application forms from interested persons.
2. The Committee will interview persons applying with the well-being of children paramount in their minds. It is not the committee's remit to assess a person's ability to fulfil a role. This process should be undertaken by the leader in charge, prior to referral to the child protection committee.
3. If a person is satisfactory the committee chairman will inform
 - (i) The Elders
 - (ii) The Diaconate
 - (iii) The Relevant Leader-in-charge
 - (iv) The Church if necessary
4. If a person is not suitable the committee elder will appoint and join another elder to visit the person and discuss reasons and offer help and/or counselling. The leader in charge of the relevant organisation will be informed of a person's unsuitability – without any reason being given. Leaders-in charge should be aware of the requirement for confidentiality from the outset of a possible appointment.
5. Minutes of any meeting will be taken and kept confidentially with application forms.

Procedure for applying for a position as leader or helper with children /young people's organisation

1. Interested person is given application form. (Appendix 2)
2. Form is returned in envelope provided to chairman of Child Protection Committee.
3. Police checking procedure for applicant will be initiated.
4. Interested person is interviewed by CPC to ascertain solely their suitability to work with children/young people (Semi formal).
5. Committee feedback outcome of interview to Elders and Diaconate.
6. Interested person may discuss outcome with elder's representative.
7. All of the above are in the strictest confidence.
8. References may be contacted (Appendix 2 & 3)
9. All workers will be required to sign declaration form (Appendix 4).

Antrim Baptist Church
Child Protection Policy
Appendix 1
Parental Consent Form

I give permission for my child to attend : (please tick all that apply)

Sunday School/Bible Class _____ Eagles/6:25/Youth Fellowship _____

Child's full name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Home phone number (including code) _____

Date of birth _____

Name by which young person is normally known _____

Phone number where you can be contacted in an emergency (mobile) _____

If unavailable contact: Name _____ Phone No: (incl code) _____

Relationship to child _____

Name and phone number of GP _____

Details of any known conditions, allergies etc. (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) and any medication being taken _____

Any other special needs, requirements or directions that it would be helpful for the leaders to know.

In the event of illness or accident, having parental responsibility for the above-named child, I give my permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary and appropriate. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible.

I confirm the above details are correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____ (person with parental responsibility)

Name printed in full _____ Date _____

Antrim Baptist Church
Child Protection Policy
Appendix 2
Application Form for Leaders/Workers
In Youth and Children's work

Name of Organisation/Group _____

Name _____

Any Previous Surname? _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ How long at this church? _____

If less than 2 years:

Name of Church you attended _____

Name and Address of Minister/Pastor _____

Please give details of previous experience (if any) of working with children and/or young people: _____

Please describe your reasons for working with children and include comments on your Christian calling for this work: _____

Are you prepared to undertake appropriate training? YES/NO

Signed _____ Date _____

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Please give the name, address, telephone number and position of two people who know you well (not members of your family or Antrim Baptist Church)

First Referee _____

Second Referee _____

Date Received by Committee _____

Interviewed by: _____

1.Name _____ Position _____

2.Name _____ Position _____

Decision of the Committee

Approved / Not Approved/ Deferred (Delete as appropriate)

Main reason for decision / any other comments: _____

Signed _____ Committee Chairman

Date of Decision _____

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Appendix 3 Letter to referee

Dear

_____ has applied to become a volunteer leader in one of our youth organisations. As part of our Child Protection Programme, Antrim Baptist Church require that all candidates supply names of two referees who would be able to comment on their suitability to be involved in such a position.

_____ has given your name as a referee. I would be grateful therefore if you would complete the attached form and return it to me at your earliest convenience. Please note that any information that you supply will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Committee Chairman
Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Committee

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Reference Form for Post of Youth Leader

Candidates Name: _____

Referees Name: _____

1. How long have you known the candidate?
2. In what capacity do you know the candidate? E.g. work, church, socially?
3. As far as you are aware has the candidate had any previous experience of youth work? If so give details.
4. Would you have any concerns about recommending that the candidate be appointed to a leadership role where they would have prolonged or unsupervised access to children or young people?
5. Please describe the candidate's character.
6. Any additional comments?

Signed _____ Date _____

Antrim Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Appendix 4 Declaration

To be completed by the worker.

I understand the nature of the work I am to do with

_____ (fill in name and age range of the group)

I have read the church's Child Protection Policy. I understand that it is my duty to protect the children and young people with whom I come into contact. I know what action to take if abuse is discovered or disclosed.

Signed _____ Date _____