

Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland

Summary of Child Protection Guidelines

[Name of Church]

Name of Designated Person	Contact
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Names of CPC

Names of Sunday School Teachers

Names of Youth Group leaders

The Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland acknowledges its duty under God to care for its children, young people and vulnerable adults and to promote their full development while protecting them from harm.

There is a moral obligation on anyone accepting responsibility for children, young people and vulnerable adults to provide adequate care and to pass on information concerning suspected or actual abuse of them. The guiding principle is the belief that the welfare of this group is of paramount importance.

This is a summary outline of the NSPC of I's Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. It is not a comprehensive explanation of practice and procedure and is not intended to replace the Guidelines. The full policy, particularly the sections relating to reporting and recruitment, should always be consulted.

Law

The Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church in Ireland requires all of its members to adhere to the civil law of the relevant jurisdiction and follow the dictates of the following Orders and Acts (as well as other relevant legislation) in spirit as well as in letter.

UK Legislation

- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- The Sex Offenders Act 1997
- The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003

ROI Legislation

- The Child Care Act 1991
- The Protection of Persons Reporting Abuse Act 1998
- The Children's Act 2001

Code of Practice

The full recruitment procedure is outlined in Appendix 2 of the Guidelines.

All new helpers, volunteers and paid employees who work with children or young people must undergo the appropriate vetting procedure.

They must be made aware of the Child Protection Guidelines by the Leader in Charge before they start working with children or young people.

All those involved with children or young people should be familiar with the full Guidelines and their obligations under them.

The following Leader/Child Ratios are adhered to

0-2 years: 1 member of staff to 3 children

2-3 years: 1 member of staff to 4 children

3-7 years: 1 member of staff to 8 children

8 years +: 1 member of staff to 10 children

No child will be left on their own with an adult and there will always be a minimum of 2 adults with a group.

Code of Behaviour

It is important to encourage the development of children and young people through an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. This code aims to foster an environment which encourages children to develop and grow in a safe and supportive setting.

When they join an organisation and at the beginning of each year, children should be told or reminded of what is and is not acceptable in terms of behaviour.

It is important for children to listen to their leaders' advice and instructions so that they can carry out activities correctly and safely. Leaders should communicate with children and young people in a clear and appropriate manner.

Children should not display prejudice on the grounds of disability, sectarianism, sexism or racism against other children.

When speaking to other children or adults, children should use positive language and should never be insolent, aggressive or obscene in what they say.

Physical contact with other children should be restricted to normal play and should avoid aggressive or violent behaviour.

Children should not go anywhere without a leader and should never be alone with an adult they do not know.

Children should never do anything to other children, or have anything done to themselves, that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Everyone, children, leaders and parents, should be aware of the steps which will be taken if any incident of bullying is observed or disclosed.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying of any form will not be tolerated whether physical, verbal or spiritual.

All children and young people will be made aware in an age appropriate manner of the anti-bullying code contained within the Guidelines.

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the Guidelines and recorded in the organisation Incident Book.

The parents of both the bully and the victim will be informed as will the Designated Person.

Reporting Abuse

The allegation/concern/suspicion should be noted on the Report of Concern Form in Appendix 12 of the Guidelines and passed to the Leader in Charge immediately.

The Leader in Charge will then contact the Designated Person. If the complaint is about the Leader in Charge then the Designated Person should be contacted directly.

The Designated Person will meet with the Child Protection Committee. If necessary the matter will be referred to the PSNI/ An Garda Síochána or Social Services.

If it is unclear whether abuse has taken place the concern must still be referred. It is up to the relevant agency to establish abuse and not the Church.

If a child is in danger then the PSNI or An Garda Síochána must be contacted immediately and then the procedure outlined above should be followed.

If the complaint involves the Designated Person or the Minister then concerns may be taken to the Clerk or Moderator of the relevant Presbytery.

At all stages the details of the complaint are recorded and must be kept confidential. All records should be retained in a secure place.

Health & Safety

The location of fire exits and fire extinguishers should be clear and all members of an organisation should be trained and practised in evacuating the premises when a fire alarm is sounded.

Every leader/helper should be fully acquainted with the location of the first-aid box.

Where possible, leaders/helpers should have regularly updated contact numbers for parents/guardians.

It is important for every organisation to have an 'Accident Book' in which details of accidents /injuries/ witnesses/ dates and times should be recorded.

A telephone should, where possible, be available on any premises used.

On no occasion should children or vulnerable adults be allowed to be out of the supervision of a leader or helper.

If children are to be taken out of the hall for any activity written permission must be obtained from parents/guardians.

For further information and the full child protection policy please consult the Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.