

MCF CC Child Protection Guidance for Leaders



Control and Discipline

Always:

- Prayerfully ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding
- Pray for the children or young people
- Work on each individual child's positive characteristics
- Be a good role model by setting a good example
- Ensure quieter and well behaved children receive attention
- Be consistent by working together as a team
- Let other leaders know what you have said

Never:

- Use force other than to defend a child/others from harm
- Discipline out of anger (but out of love)
- Use a "put down" with children/young people
- Humiliate a child/young person or belittle them in front of others
- Reject the child, only bad behaviour
- Allow some children to take all your time and energy
- Compare children with each other

Physical Contact

It is Good Practice to:

- Ensure that you are not left alone with a child for long periods
- Remain visible to other leaders if you are talking to a child confidentially
- Offer comfort and reassurance to a child by placing a hand on their shoulder

It is not Good Practice to:

- Rely on your reputation to protect you
- Make unnecessary contact with young people
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children
- Take a child to your home without the child's parents and the leader knowing

Never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Allow inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child
- Let allegations go unclarified, unrecorded or unexplored with other leaders and the designated person
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves

First Aid:

- Use a First Aider where possible
- Make immediate contact with parent/carer when necessary

Stamp Out Bullying

Bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated in MCF (see Antibullying Policy)

What to do if it happens

- Bring the two parties together and help them to decide on the best action to take
- Encourage the bully to say sorry
- If serious, talk to your Designated Person
- If the bully continues with the behaviour, consider suspension or exclusion
- If the incident is serious or becomes persistent, inform parents

Every Child should

- Know bullying is wrong
- Receive appropriate care if they are the victim or the bully
- Be encouraged to tell

- Be taught to respect all

Caution! Photographs and Internet

Avoid posting photographs on the internet of individual children or young people

Encourage children/young people to keep personal details private when using the internet

Safety Checks

- Is there adequate adult supervision with adequate ratios to children?
- Is there written permission of parents/ guardians for high risk activities?
- Are you aware of medication and allergy information?
- Are young people supervised in the kitchen area?
- Are areas where maintenance work is taking place screened off and fire escapes unblocked?
- Where is the accident report book?

Insurance

- Inform the Church leadership and Board of Directors well in advance of any hazardous activities or day trips as additional insurance may be required.

Concerns about a child

DO:

- Stay calm
- Take the child seriously
- Listen to the child
- Reassure them they have done the right thing in telling
- Write down what was said to you
- Tell the leader in charge who will report to the Designated Person or in emergency contact Duty Social Worker or ISPCC 01 6767960

DON'T:

- Doing nothing is not an option
- Don't panic
- Don't make a child repeat the story unnecessarily
- Don't promise to keep secrets
- Don't enquire into details
- Don't deal with the problem alone

Transport

- Ensure seatbelts are worn at all time and booster seats as legally required
- Ensure there is adequate liability cover
- Avoid transporting a young person on their own
- If you have to transport a child by yourself make sure other leaders know what is happening and that the child is in the rear of the vehicle.
- Make sure there is supervision in the rear of minibuses and coaches

Ratios

There should always be more than 1 adult leader

Young leaders/helpers (i.e. age 16-17 years) must never be left alone with children

- 5-17 years = 1 leader: 8 children

This ratio is for indoor activities.

For outdoor activities and residential try to have 2 extra leaders

This document is adapted with permission and thanks from Presbyterian Church in Ireland Taking Care Department "We Care 4u Too! A Leader's Guide" Presbyterian Church in Ireland Board of Social Witness takingcare@presbyterianireland.org www.presbyterianireland.org/takingcare