

2010

Child Protection Policy
& Procedures



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Introduction

The Lifeboat Fellowship endeavours to present God's only way of salvation to children and young people (Mark 10:14). Integral to this is our moral obligation to be mindful of the well being of the children and young people entrusted to our care.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

According to the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child, which the UK government signed in December 1991, children have rights relating to:

- Reasonable standards of living;
- Protection from violence, abuse, and exploitation;
- Protection for those cared for away from home and for those with a disability;
- Being able to use their own language, enjoy their own culture, and practice their own religion;
- The protection of the environment in which they live.

Children (NI) Order 1995

The Children (NI) Order 1995 deals with the care, upbringing, and protection of children. It has five underlying principles, which have clear implications for all involved in work with children and young people.

1. **Paramountcy** - The welfare of the child **must always be** the paramount consideration in decisions taken about him or her.
2. **Parental responsibility** - Parents have responsibilities to their children rather than rights over them.
3. **Prevention** - This is about preventing situations arising where children are unnecessarily separated from their families. It is also about the State providing services to keep children safely within their families and to promote their health or welfare.
4. **Partnership** – This encourages us to work in partnership with parents and other agencies, as the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met.
5. **Protection** – This places a 'duty of care' on all who work with children to report child protection concerns to the appropriate agencies.

In the light of this legislation, it is prudent of us as a church fellowship to be seen to be doing everything we can to ensure the protection of the children with whom we come into contact. In so doing, we will be giving parents confidence in our ministries, knowing that, if it is at all possible, their children will be protected from harm while in our care.

This document attempts to set out clear guidelines and procedures for all leaders and workers in the Lifeboat Fellowship. It includes a Code of Behaviour that every leader and worker must follow, not only to protect the child, but also to protect themselves from allegations of abuse. God's Word reminds us to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matt 10:16). May we so be, for the sake of the children.

Child Protection Policy Statement

We in the Lifeboat Fellowship believe that all the children and young people entrusted to our care should enjoy the facilities, meetings and activities provided by us without fear of harm. We wish to ensure that all children participate in a safe and enjoyable environment in which they feel valued. The Lifeboat Fellowship leadership, with the assistance of all their children's/youth workers, will take every appropriate step to ensure the safety and well being of children and young people with whom we work, regardless of class, race or creed.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a Code of Behaviour for leaders and workers
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, leaders, and workers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- Following carefully the procedures for the appointment of leaders and workers
- Providing effective management for leaders and workers through supervision, support, and training
- Ensuring that safety procedures are adhered to

Our policy applies to all our church leaders and workers. We accept and recognise our responsibilities for child protection. We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and practice at regular intervals, at least every 3 years.

Code of Behaviour

This code of behaviour is to be put into practice at all times by our leaders and workers and is to be remembered even at sensitive times e.g. when dealing with bullying, abuse or bereavement.

General Principles

In all the Lifeboat Fellowship's activities, workers should give children appropriate time to express their opinions. All children should be valued and respected as individuals and workers should be available to listen to the children whenever necessary.

Workers are encouraged to praise children for good behaviour and show consistency in their approach to each child. Workers should encourage the children to participate in all the activities, which are available, and their achievements should be recognised.

Workers should always work openly with children and take responsible precautions to ensure that they are not left alone with a child completely unobserved. Remember you cannot rely upon your good name to protect you.

All workers are expected to be good examples to the children and to work together with the Lifeboat Fellowship's leadership and co-workers for the safety and benefit of the children.

Workers should ensure that activities are carefully planned in advance and that children are adequately supervised at all times.

The Lifeboat Fellowship does not permit the consumption of alcohol, or the misuse of drugs/substances or the wilful destruction of property at any of its activities.

Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Leaders/Workers

In order to reduce likely situations for abuse of children and to help protect leaders/workers from false accusations it is necessary that all leaders/workers recognise that it does not make sense to...

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone in a car on journeys, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents, and someone in charge of the event.
- Take children to your home.

We should **never**...

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay - apart from structured sports activities
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Make **unnecessary** physical contact with children
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child - even in fun
- Let allegations made by a child go without being addressed and recorded
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves
- Form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust
- Use physical punishment or discipline out of anger

Physical contact with children

- Be mindful of how and where you touch a child - the child must feel comfortable with the contact.
- There may be contact during sports or games, but remember your size and strength, and so restrict your involvement for the safety of the children.
- Physical contact of a comforting and reassuring nature is a valid way of expressing your concern and care. However, *it is only appropriate if it is meeting the need of the child.*
- Physical contact should only ever take place with the consent of the child.

Protecting children from harming themselves

- Sometimes restraint may need to be applied to a child in order to protect him/her from harming themselves or others, or seriously damaging property. It should never be used to inflict pain or as a general means of control.
- The proper use of restraint requires skill and judgement. Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied. Leaders should never try to restrain a young person on their own. Another leader may act as an assistant or as a witness.
- Remember that restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Following an incident when restraint has been used, a report should be inserted in the Accident/Incident Report book.

Meeting with individual children for counselling/guidance

- Meeting with individual children should take place as openly as possible
- If privacy is needed, the door should be left open and other leaders/workers informed of the meeting
- Ensure there is another leader/worker on the premises for the duration of the counselling/guidance session.
- If counselling/guidance is taking place other than at a Lifeboat Fellowship event, then it may be advisable to not go alone. The worker should agree an appointment date, time and venue, confirm all details with the appropriate leader-in-charge and gain parental consent.

Personal relationships

Workers involved in relationships with other workers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within the ministry or put children in a potentially harmful situation.

Guidelines for the Supervision of children/young people

- Children should **never** be left unsupervised while in our care.
- Leaders-in-charge must be satisfied that those workers who supervise children and young people are fully competent to do so.
- Bus drivers should not be left to supervise children.
- Children will always be safer when supervised by two or more adults.
- When only two adults are present in the room, *as far as possible* they should be one male and one female.
- Workers should know at all times where children are and what they are doing.
- Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment should have constant adult supervision;
- Dangerous behaviour by children should not be allowed.

- Young people (those under 18 years of age) who are helping leaders should not be left alone in a supervisory capacity with children.
- In a "meeting" situation, a **minimum** ratio of 1 adult to 8 children should be aimed at, and on outings this ratio should be increased to a **minimum** of 1 adult to 5 children.

The standard recommended adult/child ratios are:

0-2 years	1 adult to 3 children
2-3 years	1 adult to 4 children
3-7 years	1 adult to 8 children
8 years and over	2 adult (preferably one of each gender) for up to 20 children.

There should be one additional adult for every 10 extra children and/or young people.

The ratio of workers to children with disabilities is dependent upon the needs of the individual child.

Supervision of children on journeys/outings/trips

The organisers of journeys/visits should plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities for the children who are involved in the project.

Organisers are responsible for the welfare and safety of the children for the **whole time** they are away from home.

Young people should not be left to their own devices, for example, in a town for the evening or on shopping expeditions. However parental consent may be sought for older teens to have less direct supervision as long as they stay in groups.

All children should be adequately supervised and engaged in suitable activities at all times.

In circumstances when planned activities are disrupted, e.g. due to weather conditions, then organisers should have a number of alternative activities planned.

Organisers should obtain, in writing, parental consent to children joining an organised trip.

Parents should be given full information about a trip, including details of the programme of events, the activities in which the children will be engaged.

In public with children

- Think of how you appear in public when dealing with children
- The safety of the child is paramount at all times
- Do not go into the toilets alone with the children; if at all possible have another adult present
- Do not shout at or roughly handle a child
- Parental permission **must** be obtained from the person(s) who have parental responsibility, before taking a child to any place other than the usual venue.

Guidelines on Bullying

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at the Lifeboat Fellowship, whether it is emotional, physical, racist, sexual, verbal, or cyber.

If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the leader-in-charge. The needs of the victim of bullying are paramount.

Incidents of bullying must be investigated and recorded. Bullying must be stopped quickly.

In serious cases parents should be informed and suspension of the bully (bullies) will be considered.

An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour and genuinely apologise. If possible, the children will be reconciled.

After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not occur.

Guidelines about Modern Technology

A blanket ban on mobile phones is not necessary as mobiles may be useful in emergencies but their use should not be such that it compromises the leader/worker's ability to maintain a safe environment and give their full attention to the supervision of children.

Contacting children and young people by phone, text or email should not be undertaken without parental consent. Workers should not normally make their mobile phone numbers or email addresses available to the children.

The use of obscene images or language on mobile phones is not tolerated in the Lifeboat Fellowship meetings or activities and will result in confiscation of the mobile phone and parents being informed.

Photographs, video or other images of children should not be taken without the consent of the parents and children. The purpose for which these images will be used should be made clear. The Lifeboat Fellowship will take all steps to ensure that these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended.

Photographs, videos and other images of children will not be displayed on the internet without parental consent. Group photographs should be used in preference to individual photographs and avoid naming the children.

Guidelines on Special Needs

The church has a Christian duty to be inclusive and to provide opportunities for children and young people of all abilities.

Leaders and workers need to be aware that children and young people who have a disability can be at a greater risk of abuse. Also, the definition of what constitutes abuse is wider for children with disabilities.

Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are welcome at the Lifeboat Fellowship. We will work in partnership with the child, parents and any professionals to establish how the child can be included.

Workers should be made aware of the child's special needs and how to deal with them.

Higher worker ratios may be required if the child has additional needs or behavioural problems.

Expectations from Children and Young People

1. Respect the authority of the leaders/ workers.
2. Respect the views and feelings of other children/ young people at the meetings and activities.
3. Respect the right that all children/ young people in attendance have to express their views and to be heard.
4. The following behaviours are deemed unacceptable at any of the Lifeboat Fellowship's meetings or activities:
 - The consumption of alcohol, smoking, or the misuse of drugs/substances
 - The wilful destruction of property
 - The physical or verbal abuse of any of the leaders, workers, or other children/young people.

All leaders/ workers should be given a copy of the Lifeboat Fellowship's Code of Behaviour and it should be available upon request for parents and Lifeboat Fellowship members. Leaders need to be consistent when implementing the Code of Behaviour.

Sharing Information

... with children and young people

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have a *Right to Information*, especially any information that would make life better and safer for them. At all Lifeboat Fellowship events, children/young people should be informed:

- Of the rules and regulations of the event they are attending, and of our expectations of them, including how they behave towards other individuals.
- Of the fire safety procedures of the venue at which the event is held.
- Of the facilities that are available for their use at the venue, e.g. toilets, tuck-shop.
- About how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints, and anxieties.

This information will usually be given at the commencement of the event by the person in charge.

... with parents

Parents are responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible and caring organisation.

They should be aware of the nature of relationships with adults with whom their children form friendships.

To support this, we should:

- Publicise information about our events in the local paper and by visiting homes in the area
- Make them aware that we have a child protection policy.
- Make them aware of whom they should contact if they have concerns or complaints.

... with workers

Good information will enable workers to know how to deal with emergencies and child protection issues. It will also enable them to pass concerns to the appropriate person within the church fellowship.

Therefore, **all** workers will undergo training in child protection policy and procedures, and this training will be updated at regular intervals.

Manner of sharing information

When sharing information, we will be sensitive to the level of understanding, maturity, and responsibility of the people with whom we are sharing. For example, the sharing of policy and procedures with children will be done in a manner appropriate to their age.

Gaining Essential Confidential Information

The Lifeboat Fellowship seeks to ensure the protection of children and young people by gathering the following basic information:

- Knowing who has parental responsibility for all children
- Having a record of the name, address and contact number for all parents/carers for use in emergency situations.

- Making sure we have information about any health issues, medication, learning difficulties that affect the children/young people attending the Lifeboat Fellowship meetings or activities.
- Obtaining parental consent for all activities and for the taking of photographs.

Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of the Lifeboat Fellowship to only communicate information of a confidential nature on a 'need to know' basis.

Personal and sensitive details which parents have confided about their children or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.

All leaders, workers and children must be aware that there are some situations in which confidentiality needs to be broken, specifically, if you are concerned that a person is in danger, either to themselves or from someone else, or if you suspect that an offence may have been committed.

Storage of Personal Data

The gathering and storage of personal data for Lifeboat Fellowship meetings and activities is to be in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act.

This essential personal information about children attending Lifeboat Fellowship meetings/activities is to be stored securely but be readily available for use in emergencies.

Accident/Incident Reports

The accident/incident report book/forms are to be used to record details of accidents, injuries and minor incidents. Details of persons involved, what happened, witnesses, place and date should be recorded.

Procedures for Reporting Concerns

Designated Person

The Designated Person (DP) is the individual within the church fellowship to whom all concerns and disclosures should be brought. The Designated Person is appointed by the elders of the Lifeboat Fellowship and may be contacted at any time for advice/guidance.

The Designated Person may then discuss the concern/suspicion/allegation with Social Services, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral. It is not necessary for the Designated Person to hear any disclosure first-hand. This eliminates the need for the child to recount a traumatic experience more than once.

What is Child Abuse?

The following are the definitions for Child Abuse as found in the Children (NI) Order 1995 guidelines “Co-operating to protect children”:

Physical Abuse: Is the deliberate physical injury to a child or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering;

Emotional Abuse: Is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;

Sexual Abuse: This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical activities or non-contact activities such as forcing the child to view pornography;

Neglect: Is the persistent failure to meet a child’s physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve failing to provide adequate foods, shelter, clothing, and medical care;

Bullying: Is not in itself a form of abuse, but a child who is bullied may be suffering any of the types of abuse defined above. It takes many forms but the main types are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing)
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments)
- Cyber (via mobile phones, email, websites)
- Emotional (excluding, being unfriendly)

The damage inflicted by bullying, can frequently be underestimated.

Checking concerns

If something gives you cause for concern, there are some things you can do to check your concern:

- Ask the child – If the child has an injury you could ask, “What happened to you?” or if the child is upset, simply asking, “What’s wrong?” is enough to give the child an opportunity to open up;
- Ask other workers – other workers may have insight into the situation that will immediately put your mind at ease. If not, they may have noticed something that will reinforce your concern;
- Ask the parents – when leaving the child home, or when the parent comes to collect the child, it is possible to ask quite informally, “I noticed she wasn’t her usual bubbly self tonight. Is she alright?” Doing so will give the parent an opportunity to put your mind at ease. The problem might simply be that the child’s pet hamster has died. The parent’s response will guide you as to what to do next.

Remember – **do not investigate**. Your responsibility lies in reporting concerns to the relevant person, who will then deal with the matter appropriately.

Reporting procedure for Concerns

It is not appropriate to record details of alleged or suspected child abuse in the accident/incident report book, so if you have concerns about a child:

- Fill in a *Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse* Form - try to include as much detail as possible - document the reasons for your concern, e.g. bruising, lethargy, sexual conversation inappropriate to the age of the child, etc. This form is available from the leader-in-charge or the Designated Person
- Give the form to the Designated Person who will contact you to clarify anything they don’t understand
- Quietly monitor the situation and report any further developments to the Designated Person, making sure these developments are recorded
- Do not discuss your concerns openly with other workers unless you think they may be able to shed some light on the situation. Be discreet!

Reporting procedure for Disclosures

If a child comes to you and begins to disclose abuse, these are the guidelines, which should be followed:

Do

Stay calm

Listen and hear – give the child time to say what he wants

Reassure that he/she has done nothing wrong

Record in writing what was said as soon as possible (Form available from leader-in-charge or Designated Person)

Report sent to Designated Person

DON’T

Don’t panic

Don’t ask leading questions e.g. “Did your Dad...?”

Don’t promise to keep secrets

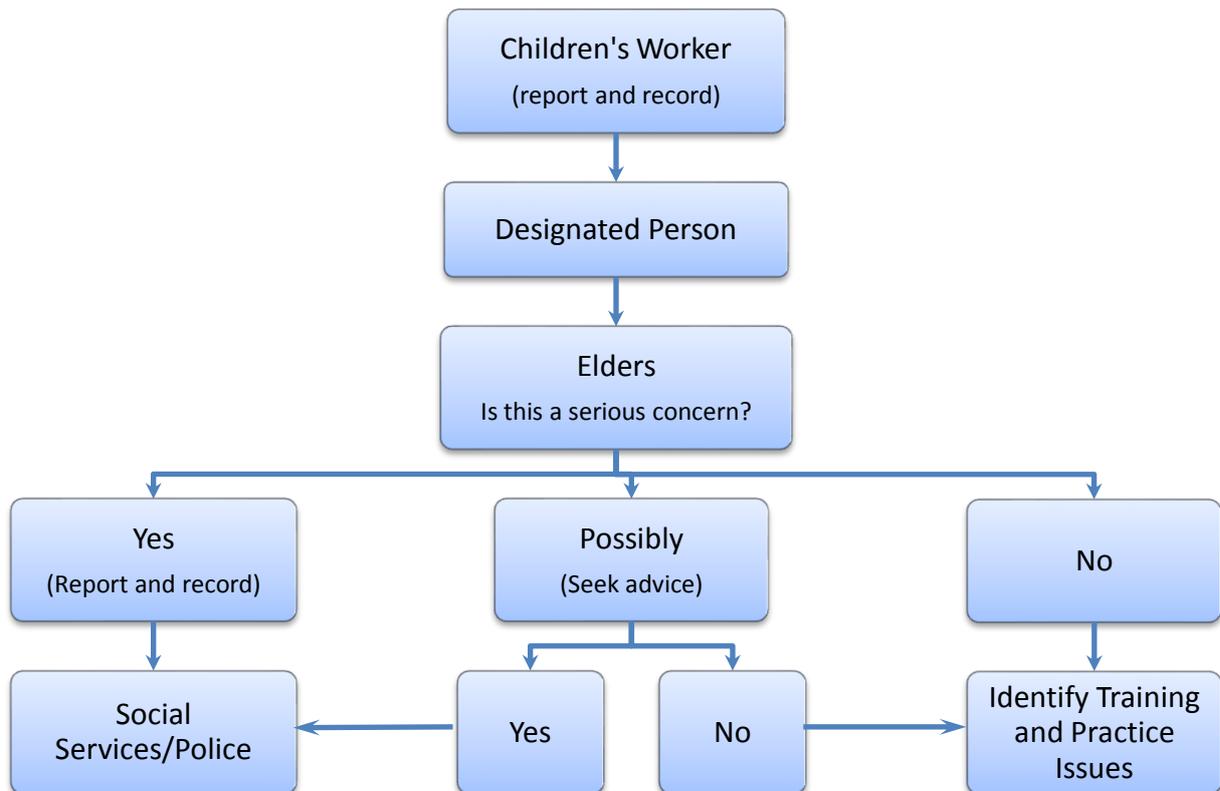
Don’t inquire into details of abuse

Don’t make a child repeat the story unnecessarily

Some further help

- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after it has taken place, even if it is information you do not understand fully, or like writing down. **It is important** - stick with it! (*Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Form*).
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.
- Remember information must only ever be passed on on a "**need-to-know**" basis. All concerns and disclosures need to remain as confidential as possible.
- If the Designated Person is not available, please contact an elder.

Flowchart for Reporting Concern about a Child



Procedure for dealing with an Allegation against a Leader/worker

In the event of an allegation against a leader or other worker the following procedures will be followed:

- Fill in a *Record of Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Form* and give it to the Designated Person as soon as possible. The Designated Person will inform the elders of the Lifeboat Fellowship.
- The elders should inform the leader/worker of the nature of the allegation, provide him/her with opportunity to respond to the allegation and fully record his/her response.
- To ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk, the leader/worker should be suspended from their position **after** consultation with the relevant statutory authorities.
- Parents/carers should be informed immediately, after taking advice from statutory authorities as to how this might best be done.

- Forward the report and worker's response to statutory authorities as soon as possible.

The statutory authorities will decide whether the report indicates that significant harm has occurred and whether further legal action will be instigated.

It is very important to maintain close links with the statutory authorities in order to ensure that no actions taken by the Lifeboat Fellowship might undermine any formal investigations.

While the safety of the children is of paramount importance, the alleged perpetrator should be shown appropriate Christian love and support. Support needs to be provided appropriately in consultation with statutory services.

If the Lifeboat Fellowship elders dismiss a leader/worker as unsuitable to work with children, they should inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority so that the person's name can be considered for the Barring List from Working with Children.

Allegations against the Designated Person

If an allegation is made against the Designated Person, the elders of the Lifeboat Fellowship should be informed. *The Record of Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse Form* should be **given directly to an elder** as soon as possible. The elders will deal with the allegation according to the procedure outlined above.

Appointment of Workers

The elders of the Lifeboat Fellowship are responsible for the appointment of all leaders and workers who work with children and young people in their various ministries. They hold the right to request references for persons previously unknown to Lifeboat Fellowship members.

To help prevent unsuitable persons from working with children and young people in the Lifeboat Fellowship, it is recommended that the following steps are followed:

1. The potential worker is given an *Application Form* to fill in and has the nature of the work explained to them.
2. If the elders consider the person suitable, they ask the Designated Person to arrange for a disclosure check to be undertaken for the individual.
3. The Lifeboat Fellowship is using Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) as an umbrella organisation to request disclosure checks for all potential leaders/workers. CEF will inform the Lifeboat Fellowship's Designated Person on the status of any disclosure checks.
4. From January 2010 all new leaders/workers must have their disclosure check completed before commencing work among children and young people in the Lifeboat Fellowship.

From January 2010 all new workers should complete an application form. It is good practice for the elders to have a list of all current workers.

Checks with Access NI

Access NI is the organisation in Northern Ireland that processes the police record checks, providing criminal history information. An enhanced check is necessary for all persons who work in a regulated position with children and vulnerable adults. In the Lifeboat Fellowship this applies to:

- Sunday School teachers
- Children's Hour workers
- Youth Fellowship leaders
- The Barn leaders
- Crèche workers
- Designated Person
- Elders
- Deacons

Access NI checks are to be carried out for all leaders and workers aged 16 or over.

Supervision, Support and Training

Working with children is both worthwhile and fulfilling, but also challenging.

Once appointed all leaders and workers will be well informed, trained, supervised, and supported, so that they are less likely to become involved in actions which can lead to harm, or can be misunderstood.

Training

As newcomers, workers will be made aware of the tasks they will be performing and the Lifeboat Fellowship's child protection policy and procedures and Code of Behaviour.

Training is a continual process and will include:

- Raising awareness in child protection
- Health and safety
- Particular skills training with regards teaching children

The Lifeboat Fellowship will be working closely with the CEF child protection co-ordinator for the training of their leaders and workers.

Supervision and Support of Workers

It is the elders' responsibility to support workers and the Designated Person should keep them up-to-date with child protection issues and with other policies as they arise.

Workers should feel free to approach the person in charge in order to share anxieties, concerns, or worries, especially about the work in which they are involved. This includes any concerns of a practical nature - transport, health and safety, programme, etc

Supervision and support will take the form of regular visits, e.g. to the Children's Hour, Youth Fellowship, Barn, and other informal discussions as the need arises.

At these visits important issues can be addressed and training needs identified. Training needs will include the development of a worker's particular gift either "on-the-job" or through organised training.

Principles of Good Practice

Ministry Guidelines

The following are some practical guidelines for each of our ministries:

Sunday School and Children's Hour

The teacher/leader in charge is to make the children aware that the teachers/workers are available to help them, and how the children and teachers/workers are to behave in Sunday School/Children's Hour, and what the children are to do in event of a fire.

The teachers/workers are expected to follow the Lifeboat Fellowship's Code of Behaviour. This is in place to protect both you and the children.

Ensure that parental consent forms, children's medical details, and an accident/incident report book are available in every meeting and activity. Keep register of attendance. A nominated adult teacher/leader should take responsibility for this.

When transporting children to a meeting or other event, the drivers should check their motor insurance cover, avoid overcrowding a car, and avoid being alone with a child in a car.

Junior helpers can be most beneficial in the meetings to help with tasks like giving out sweets and tokens, but they should never be left alone to supervise children or take children to the toilet.

Youth Fellowship

Youth Fellowship leaders who are under 18 years of age should not be left alone with children or in a supervisory role. All leaders are expected to follow the Lifeboat Fellowship's Code of Behaviour.

The leader in charge should keep the elders of the Lifeboat Fellowship fully informed about any planned trips, outings or residential and about any needs or problems.

Ensure that parental consent is gained for all young people under 18 years of age for meetings, other activities and photographs. A nominated leader should take responsibility for this and share these details with the Barn leaders, if appropriate.

The Barn

The leaders in charge of the Barn should keep the elders of the Lifeboat Fellowship fully informed about speakers, needs, problems, or any other activities.

Ensure that parental consent is gained for all young people under 18 years of age for meetings, other activities and photographs. A nominated leader should take responsibility for this.

Leaders should use discretion if contacting young people under 18 years of age by phone, text, email or the internet regarding The Barn events, so that they do not leave themselves open for allegations of abuse.

All leaders are expected to follow the Lifeboat Fellowship's Code of Behaviour.

Crèche

There should be a minimum of 2 adults in the crèche each Sunday.

Crèche assistants who are under 18 years of age should never be left alone to supervise children but may be counted as workers to make up stated ratios, so long as other adult leaders are present and in charge.

Crèche assistants who are under 18 years of age should not be providing intimate care for children.

It is preferable that only one underage crèche assistant is on duty on any given Sunday and that they are guided as to how to care for the little children.

Any equipment or furniture which could prevent a safe environment for children in the crèche should be removed.

Residential

Parents should be made aware of all aspects of the residential programme and *Parental Consent for Residential* forms should be completed.

The recruitment procedures for all leaders should be closely followed.

All leaders should endeavour to attend a preparation meeting when individual responsibilities will be allocated and training in Child Protection procedures will be given.

When running a residential, it is important that:

- Supervision is adequate at **all** times, including any free time children may have, and that all activities have been well planned.
- Children and leaders are aware of the Fire Safety procedures.
- The children are aware of their rights and the behaviour expected of them.
- If a child is being counselled individually this should be done as openly as possible.
- An incident/accident book should be kept at the residential and returned to the Designated Person as soon as the residential is over.
- A First Aid Kit should be carried at all times.
- Sleeping accommodation for males and females should be separate
- Sleeping accommodation for leaders/workers and young people, where possible, should be separate, but the young people's accommodation should be easily accessible.
- Medication should be clearly marked and kept out of the reach of children. It is only administered with the written consent and advice of parents.

Transportation

All youth work will involve transporting young people at some stage, whether this is to and from a meeting, other activity or residential.

Leaders in charge must exercise discretion as to who is permitted to drive cars or mini-buses. The following should be considered at all times:

- Insurance cover must be adequate and up to date. Be aware of the limitations of third party insurance.

- The driver needs to be sufficiently aware of his/her responsibility towards the passengers.
- Speed limits should never be exceeded.
- The driver needs to know what to do in the event of breakdown or accident.

In addition leaders/workers should observe the guidelines below which will help ensure protection for both them and the young people.

Private cars

- Seat belts should be worn by each passenger in a private car at all times and booster seats used for children under 12 years of age.
- Avoid transporting a child or young person on your own. Try to ensure that another worker or other children/young people are with you. If a situation occurs when you have to transport a child alone, ensure other workers know this is happening, and that the child is in the rear seat.

Mini-buses/ buses/ coaches

- There should only be one child per seat on all mini-buses, buses and coaches with seat belts. But three seated children under 14 years of age may be allowed on two seats where there are no belts.
- Seat belts should be worn when provided on the bus. Leaders/workers should try to persuade children to do so for their own safety. A single seat belt must not be used by more than one child, nor should a belt be placed around a child who is on an adult's lap.
- There should be at least two adults supervising children on the bus, preferably of mixed gender and not relatives.

Children must be told their rights

Children must be told of their rights, especially in relation to their involvement with the Lifeboat Fellowship. The following are the rights, which we should share in our meetings:

- You have the right to be safe and so we ask you to obey the rules, which are there for your safety.
- You have the right to be protected from any harm. Please tell us if you feel, or have been, threatened or abused. We will listen and try to do something about it.
- You have the right to healthcare; therefore we need to know if you suffer from any illnesses. Parents should inform leaders on the relevant information form.
- You have the right to practice your own religion, but as you know during all our meetings and activities you are expected to listen to Christian views. You have the right afterwards to discuss what you have heard with your teacher without fear of prejudice.
- You have the right to be treated with dignity but you are expected to behave in a respectful way and to treat others in the same way with dignity and respect.
- You have the right to express your opinions. We would encourage you to do so at a time, which is suitable to all involved. This can easily be arranged with your teacher/leader.

Forms

Application Form to be completed by all new workers from January 2010.

Parental Consent Forms to be completed by parents of all children attending Sunday school, Children's Hour or Youth Fellowship. Leaders-in-charge should share these details with leaders in other ministries to save parents completing 2 consent forms.

Barn Parental Consent Form to be completed by parents of young people under 18 years of age attending the Barn.

Parental Consent for Residential Form to be completed by parents whose children will be attending a residential.

Volunteer Reference Form to be completed by a person giving a reference for a new worker should the elders decide they need a reference.

Record of Allegations of Abuse or Suspicions Form is available from the Designated Person and is to be completed when there is an allegation against a worker or a suspicion of abuse of a child. Give completed form to the Designated Person.

Accident/ Incident Record Form to be completed when an accident/incident occurs although accidents would normally be recorded in the accident report book. Give completed form to the Designated Person.