

KPC Youth

Child Protection Policy

“Ensuring a safe environment for children, young people and leaders.”

Policy Statement

This policy statement is aimed at providing a safe environment where children and young people may enjoy social contact, personal and spiritual development. Adults selected to work within youth ministries and who abide by the Guidelines should be secure in the knowledge that they have the full support of the Kirk Session of Knock Presbyterian Church.

1. Adoption of Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) Child Protection Guidelines

The Kirk Session of Knock Presbyterian Church has adopted The Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Child Protection Guidelines approved by the General Assembly and revised 2004. All organisations are expected to adhere to these Guidelines. The Kirk Session will review the implementation of the Guidelines annually.

2. Leadership

The Kirk Session believes that the selection procedures outlined in the Child Protection Guidelines greatly assist the assessment of a person's suitability to work with children and young people and that those appointed therefore will be more assured of their position and of the confidence placed in them by the Kirk Session and members of the congregation.

The following procedures must be followed for the appointment of leaders/helpers who will be 18 years or over.

- i) All leaders will be required to complete an Application Form.
- ii) Applicants will be required to provide 2 references, by persons who are not relatives. (All confidential records e.g. applications and references will be stored safely by the Minister).
- iii) The Kirk Session will appoint an interviewer to meet informally with the candidate. Interviewers will normally be the organisational leader, youth director, children's director and/or a Minister/Elder.
- iv) At the interview the Child Protection Policy will be provided and explained.

3. Reporting of Concerns

The leaders in each of our organisations will be fully conversant with the opportunity for consultation and of the referral procedure where there is concern about the welfare of a child, as outlined in the Child Protection Guidelines.

4. Code of Practice

Each organisation will be expected to comply with the Good Team Procedures outlined in the Child Protection Guidelines.

5. Parental Consent Forms

Organisational leaders must ensure that Parental Consent Forms are completed at the commencement of each session for each child attending organisations. Special consent forms will be issued for any 'off the premises' activity and residentials. Leaders in charge will store these forms in a safe place.

6. Designated Person(s)

The Kirk Session has appointed a Designated Person (**Mrs Brenda McClatchey**) who will provide consultation, advice, training and support to organisations and to the Kirk Session on matters concerning the welfare of children and young people. The Kirk Session will keep organisational leaders updated with the name of the Designated Person(s). Any matter brought to the attention of the Designated Person will be treated in strict confidence. Information will be divulged only where there is a legitimate need to know.

Additional advice and consultation can be accessed from the Board of Social Witness in Church House.

7. Health and Safety

The Kirk Session expects organisations to adhere to the guidance on safety matters outlined in the Child Protection Guidelines.

8. Transport

Organisations are expected to adhere to the guidance of the Child Protection Guidelines relating to use of private cars and minibuses for transporting children to and from youth activities.

9. Residentials

Guidance on residential trips is provided in the Child Protection Guidelines and will be followed on all residential trips organised by the Young People Organisation of Knock (YPOK) of Knock Presbyterian Church.

10. Implementation and Review

The Kirk Session is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, and will review it every three years with the leaders in charge of youth organisations.

11. Taking Care Guidelines

A copy of "Taking Care – Creating a Safe Environment for Children, Young People and Leaders" will be available for study and reference in the Church Office

12. Date of authorisation by Kirk Session

Date: 15 May 2006