

# Borras Park Evangelical Church

Jeffrey's Road, Wrexham

## Child Protection Policy

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Changes</b>	<b>Child Protection Co-ordinator</b>	<b>Child Protection Elder</b>
Draft C	Sept 2007	Re-write in new format		
Draft D	Oct 2007	Amendments		
Draft D2	Nov 2007	Recruiter role added		
Draft E	Feb 2008	Amendments		
Rev O	Mar 2008	Issued as amended	<i>M. O'Brien</i>	<i>M. Thomas</i>
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## **Guidance for Leaders and Workers**

This section is published separately but is an integral part of the church's *Child Protection Policy*

## 1. Objectives

Borras Park Evangelical Church (the church) recognises the importance of its ministry to children and young people and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the care of the church.

As such, the church is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the children's/youth workers within the church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse in the church.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities and other organisations.

## 2. Responsibilities

We identify the following responsibilities as necessary for the operation of our *Child Protection Policy*:

- 2.1.** The Trustees of the church, in practice, the Pastor, the Elders and the Deacons, have responsibility for implementing, monitoring and providing resources for Child Protection procedures and guidelines in the church. One Elder shall be nominated by the body of the elders as Child Protection Elder, with responsibility for supervision of these duties and reporting back to them.
- 2.2. A Child Protection Co-ordinator, independent of the Elders, will be the point of contact for handling allegations and reports of incidents and reporting to the Elders on such matters. The Co-ordinator will also assist in providing information and awareness of the *Child Protection Policy* and appropriate training for leaders of activities and other workers based on the associated *Guidance for Leaders and Workers*. The Co-ordinator will maintain records of training of leaders.
- 2.3. Recruiters will be nominated by the Church Officers to manage the documentation associated with the recruitment of leaders and workers. The Lead Recruiter will normally be the Child Protection Co-ordinator, with a second person also appointed to fulfil this role in circumstances that the CCPAS in particular, require an alternative person.
- 2.4. The leaders of children's activities are responsible for observing and applying the *Child Protection Policy* and for supporting the Child Protection Co-ordinator. Leaders of activities are expected to contribute towards a tri-annual Child Protection training event and are required to ensure workers assisting them comply with the *Child Protection Policy*. Leaders are also required to take full responsibility for the appointment and supervision of any helpers, whether temporary or permanent, who are recruited to help with activities. Leaders are required to update personal details of children at least annually and also to maintain weekly records of attendance.
- 2.5.** The leaders of children's activities are responsible, in liaison with the Child Protection Co-ordinator, for conducting written risk assessments which shall have due regard, but not of necessity be limited to:
  - i) The ages of the children involved in the activity;
  - ii) The nature of the activities involved;
  - iii) The location within the building, or outside, where the group meets and also to 'out of bounds' areas, e.g. the kitchen
- 2.6.** All members and, where appropriate, adherents of the church are responsible for supporting leaders involved in children's work and the Church Officers operating the policy

## 3. Principles

In order to help us implement our policy we will adopt the following principles:

- 3.1. Written records will be kept of activities and attendance, both to provide information helpful to the care of children and to provide evidence in the event of disputes.

- 3.2. We will encourage parents to provide relevant information regarding their children in order to assist leaders of children's activities in making appropriate decisions about those children.
- 3.3. Parents will be informed of the church's policies relevant to the care of their children (e.g. the nature of the church's Discipline Policy), in order that they understand how the church will manage children's activities and also what standard of behaviour the church will expect from their children.
- 3.4. Leaders of children's activities, as well as those assisting, will receive training in the provisions of our *Child Protection Policy* to ensure that they apply its provisions correctly and in a consistent and clear manner. See Appendix 3.
- 3.5. In order to prevent known offenders from undertaking work with children in the church, all leaders, workers and regular helpers involved with children's activities will be asked to apply for a formal Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before they are engaged. All information provided to a Recruiter by applicants and contained in DBS documentation will be handled with the strictest of confidentiality in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice. See Appendix 2.
- 3.6. To ensure that allegations are properly dealt with, and to ensure that parents can continue to have confidence in our arrangements, we will deal with all allegations of abuse or neglect in accordance with Section 3 of the *Guidance for Leaders and Workers*, reporting to the appropriate external authority as appropriate.
- 3.7. Consideration should be given by the group leaders, in liaison with the Child Protection Co-ordinator, to the appropriateness of notifying parents/guardians in the event of their child's behaviour being worthy of an entry in the attendance register, and thus the completion of an incident report, as well as the manner of such notification. The discussion and the result will be recorded and, should the parent be informed, an observation of the manner in which it was received.
- 3.8. We will deal with all reports relating to individuals promptly and in strict confidence.
- 3.9. We are committed to on-going child protection training for all child workers and will regularly review our *Guidance for Leaders and Workers*, in keeping with the principles found within the Home Office Abuse Of Trust guidance.

#### **4. Definitions (for the purpose of this Policy)**

Adherent	Adult in regular Sunday attendance at the church, who is not a member.
Child / Children	Any person under the age of 18 years.
CCPAS	Churches Child Protection Advisory Service.
Helper	Any person appointed by a Leader to assist Workers, and who is always under the supervision of a Leader or Worker.
Leader	Adult member appointed by the Elders to organize and oversee the running of an event under the jurisdiction of BPEC.
Member	Any person formally welcomed as a member of the church after interview by the Elders in accordance with the <i>Trust Deed</i> and <i>Constitution</i> .
Parent	Includes Guardian
Recruiter	Adult member requested by the Church Officers to register with the CCPAS for the purpose of managing DBS checks.
Worker	Adult member or adherent appointed by the Church Officers to assist a Leader in a responsible capacity.

#### **5. Selecting Workers and Leaders**

- 5.1. The only persons permitted to work with children are:
  - Leaders or Workers whose appointment has been formally recorded and whose selection included a DBS check;
  - Helpers who are under the close supervision of workers and for whom the leaders take full responsibility. Regular helpers will be asked to apply for a DBS check.
- 5.2. It is important in the first case that the appointment procedure is applied to all potential workers, irrespective of the individual's length of attendance at the church, their reputation or their relationship to other church members or adherents. In particular, the appointments of leaders, workers and helpers shall be in accordance with the church's Equal Opportunities Policy - see Appendix 7

If nominated for work with children a prospective leader, worker or regular helper will be asked to complete a form (see Appendix 1) which requires him/her to provide information which may be used to assess that individual's suitability for the post. The form will request agreement to the church making checks with the DBS, for any relevant disclosures. In the event of a positive outcome (e.g. the identification of a relevant prosecution) the Elders will consider whether this makes the individual unsuitable for the relevant post.

- 5.3. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will introduce newly selected leaders, workers and helpers to the *Child Protection Policy* and the associated *Guidance for Leaders and Workers*. Each newly appointed worker will be given a copy of the latter document. In addition all leaders, workers and helpers will be required to attend the tri-annual training event organised by the Child Protection Co-ordinator and the leaders of children's activities.
- 5.4. The suitability of persons who are not from this church who are asked to work with the church's young people on a short-term basis (e.g. for 'away' weekends) will be assessed by the appropriate leader and Church Officers. A request shall be made to their home church or sending organisation (e.g. OMF) asking for written confirmation that these bodies have conducted their own checks and that these checks have proved acceptable. In the event that this is not possible then a risk assessment should be made to determine whether one or more BPEC leaders should accompany the guest leader when working with the church's children.

On receipt of any similar request from an outside Christian body for verification of suitability of one of our members/adherents, the elders shall decide whether or not to accede. Such verification shall only be in general terms, e.g. "Criminal checks are clear and we consider this person suitable," or "We are unable to verify the suitability of X."

## **6. Supporting Workers**

- 6.1. The church has an obligation to support those it selects for working with children. It is important that the Church Officers ensure leaders are not made vulnerable by wrongful accusations and that they are offered a sympathetic hearing in the face of allegations. This will mean:
  - appropriate resourcing of activities must be ensured (e.g. to prevent situations where leaders are left alone with children for an unreasonable period of time);
  - the confidentiality of information regarding workers must be guaranteed (e.g. the security of DBS disclosures, personal detail forms, notes of meetings in the event of allegations, incident reports etc.);
  - ongoing pastoral care is provided for those facing accusations;
  - sympathy, forgiveness and pastoral care is offered, as appropriate, to offenders.
- 6.2. The *Guidance for Leaders and Workers* is provided as a source of guidance on the effective practicalities of dealing with all aspects of child care and protection considered appropriate to the work of the church. It is regularly reviewed and where appropriate updated in the light of recommendations from the CCPAS and similar organisations.

## **7. Working with offenders under Schedule 1 of the Children and Young People's Act 1933**

- 7.1. Having a known sex offender attending church requires very careful assessment and management as it is desirable that all should come in to hear the gospel and receive teaching and fellowship. However, the church has a responsibility to the other attendees, not least the children. Therefore, in such a case, Church Officers shall meet with the Child Protection Co-ordinator as well as any other person they consider appropriate, in order to formulate a contract with that person. Each case will be taken on its own merits as to what is appropriate for inclusion, but the points set out in Appendix 4, whilst not exclusive, should be considered.
- 7.2. Restrictions may have been placed on the offender as part of an after-care license and/or by the local police. It is important to maintain regular contact with the offender's supervising probation officer while he is being supervised, and subsequent to this, with the public protection unit of the police. The church should discuss the proposed contract with these parties and obtain their agreement to its contents.

## **8. Policy on outside groups using the church for children's activities**

- 8.1. Any group not regulated by the church but using the church's premises for activities involving children must be able to demonstrate that it operates an adequate child protection policy by submitting its own policy on request to the Elders. The Elders must satisfy themselves as to the adequacy of the policy submitted.
- 8.2. It is the responsibility of outside groups to produce evidence that they have insurance sufficient to cover the use of church premises and which indemnifies the church against any action for liability.

## **9. Monitoring the Policy**

It is important that the church ensures that compliance with the *Child Protection Policy* is maintained. There will be three approaches to ensuring this: training, audit and review.

- 9.1. **Training** - A tri-annual training event will be held to:
  - ensure that leaders, workers and helpers are properly acquainted with the Policy and Guidance documents;
  - promote exemplary behaviour in working with children;
  - assist leaders and workers in recognising warning signs of abuse.

The church may consider combining with other like-minded organisations to make this training as effective as possible. Additional training will be considered when new workers are appointed less than a year after a tri-annual training event. Appendix 3 lists topics for inclusion in the training event.

- 9.2. **Audit** - The Church Officers will review the operation of the Policy annually. The review will be minuted and will consist of:
  - a review of any noteworthy incidents;
  - obtaining confirmation that all leaders and workers have been subjected to DBS checks and have undergone training;
  - receiving a report from the Child Protection Co-ordinator evaluating the operation of the Policy over the past year.

- 9.3. **Policy Review** - The Church Officers will annually assess the relevance and suitability of the prevailing policy and will recommend policy amendments at a formal meeting of the members as necessary.

## **10. Confidentiality**

In order to maintain security of information, access to records containing information of a sensitive nature relating to Child Protection will be restricted to the Child Protection Co-ordinator and the Child Protection Elder. Leaders are to ensure that they maintain all other records.

Appendix 2 specifically addresses the confidential handling of DBS disclosures.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Application Form for Children's Workers**

**BORRAS PARK EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

**We ask all prospective workers in children's and young people's work to complete this form. The information will be kept confidential by the church unless requested by an appropriate authority for specified legitimate reasons.**

First name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (including postcode): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone no.: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have attended BPEC for less than 10 years, list the previous churches you attended in this period:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us something about your experience of working with children and young people. Where appropriate please name the church or group and the dates. Please indicate whether you have any relevant qualifications or training.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you suffer or have you suffered in the last 10 years from any illness which may directly affect your work with children or young people? YES / NO. (If YES, the Elders will ask you to provide details.)

**Declaration**

You will understand the great responsibility involved in working with children and young people, and the need to ensure their safety and well-being. We therefore ask you to sign the following declaration.

*Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or have received a caution or mitigated penalty from any law enforcement agency such as Police or HM Revenue & Customs, or are you at present the subject of a criminal investigation or charge?*

*Please answer 'yes' or 'no':* \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, you will be asked to meet with the Elders and provide more details.

It is a requirement of our Child Protection Policy that all workers with children complete an application form for a Disclosure & Barring Service check. Your signature below indicates your acceptance of that obligation.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval**

Subject to the results of the DBS check, the Elders approve this appointment:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Handling of DBS Disclosure information**

Recruiters and any subsequent recipients of Disclosure information:

- Shall observe guidance issued or supported by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on the use of Disclosure information.
- Shall not unfairly discriminate against the subject of Disclosure information on the basis of conviction or other details revealed.
- Must ensure that Disclosure information is not passed to persons not authorised to receive it.
- Must ensure that Disclosures and the information they contain are available only to those who need to have access in the course of their duties
- Must securely store Disclosures and the information that they contain
- Should retain neither Disclosures nor a record of Disclosure information contained within them for longer than is required for the particular purpose. In general, this should be no later than six months after the date on which recruitment or other relevant decisions have been taken, or after the date on which any dispute about the accuracy of the Disclosure information has been resolved. This period should be exceeded only in very exceptional circumstances which justify retention for a longer period.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Training content**

It is recommended that the tri-annual training event, organised by the Child Protection Co-ordinator, should include at least the following content:

- The purpose of the *Child Protection Policy and Guidance for Leaders and Workers*.
- Awareness of the procedures embodied in the Policy and Guidance documents.
- Awareness of current legislation relating to Child Protection;
- Recognition of signs of abuse and bullying.
- The need for consistency and clear application of the policy and procedures.
- Standards of personal behaviour towards children.
- How to organise activities in order to minimise the possibility of wrongful allegations.
- How to deal with difficult behaviour, including restraining techniques.
- Housekeeping: Fire Drill, Health and Safety, First Aid
- How to deal with an allegation or similar complaint



## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Contracts with offenders under Schedule 1 of the Children and Young People's Act 1933**

The following clauses should be considered for inclusion as appropriate:

- I accept that I will not be considered for assisting with children's activities in the church.
- I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children or young people.
- I will attend meetings /house groups after discussion with *x* or *y* who will act as my point of liaison with the church leadership.
- I will sit where directed in the church and will not place myself in the vicinity of children and young people.
- I will not enter parts of the church if specified by the church leaders, or any area where children's activities are in progress.
- I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children in the home.
- I accept that *x* and *y* (named persons) will sit with me during church activities, accompanying me when I need to use other facilities such as the toilet. They will know that I am a Schedule 1 Offender registered with the police under the terms of the Sex Offenders Act.
- I accept that there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children and young people for whom they care.
- I accept that contact may be made with my probation officer, the police public protection department and social services as and when necessary. (Where appropriate).
- I accept that *x*, *y* and *z* (*named persons*) will provide pastoral care and look after my welfare.
- I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, then I may be barred from attending the church, and in such circumstances, the leadership may consider it appropriate to inform the statutory agencies (e.g. police, probation and social services), any other relevant organisation and the church congregation.
- I understand that any other concerns will be taken seriously and reported.
- I understand that this contract will be reviewed every \_\_\_\_\_ months and will remain for an indefinite period.

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Key Contacts (as at Aug 2014)**

CP Co-ordinator:	John Mills	01978 851606	
CP Elder:	Mike O'Brien	01244 571323	07903 728909
Churches Child Protection Advisory Service			08451 204550
Flintshire & Wrexham Local Safeguarding Children Board (FWLSCB)			01978 292039 (Wrexham)
			01352 701000 (Flintshire)
FWLSCB outside office hours			08450 533116
N. Wales Police			101

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **Abuse**

#### **Statutory Definitions of Child Abuse.**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

The following definitions of child abuse are recommended as criteria throughout Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and the Home Office in their joint document, Working Together to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (2000).

#### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This is commonly described using terms such as 'factitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen Syndrome by proxy'.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

#### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **Equal Opportunities Policy**

1. The Church is committed to meeting in accordance with scriptural principles the spiritual and, where appropriate, practical needs of those we serve, regardless of race, religion, lifestyle, sex, sexuality, physical/mental disability, offending background or any other factor.
2. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure Service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Church undertakes to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
3. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience and commitment to the values of the Church.
4. A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.
5. Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to the Child Protection Elder within the Church and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of a recruitment process.
6. Unless the nature of the position allows the Church to ask questions about the applicant's entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
7. We ensure that all those members of the Church who are involved in the recruitment process have access to information and advice in order to identify and assess the relevance of circumstances of offences.
8. At interview, or in separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work.
9. We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
10. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

*Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.*