

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, young people and vulnerable adults 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 (“KPC”).

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 Taking Care Child Protection Guidelines approved by the General Assembly in 2004 and revised in 2011. All organisations must adhere to these Guidelines as agreed by the General Assembly in 2008. The Kirk Session will review the policy every three years and keep Taking Care on the Agenda of Youth Sub Committee meetings with a view to informing the Kirk Session of any issues arising on a regular basis.

2. Leadership

The Kirk Session believes that the recruitment and appointment process set out in the Taking Care Guidelines greatly assist the assessment of a person's suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and that those appointed therefore will be more assured of their position and of the confidence placed in them by the Kirk Session.

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

- i) All leaders will be required to complete an Online Application Form.
- ii) The application form includes the vetting process according to legislation and good practice.
- iii) Applicants will be required to provide 2 references, by persons who are not relatives.
- iv) The Kirk Session will appoint up to two interviewers to meet informally with the applicant. Interviewers will normally be the organisational leader, youth director, children's director, Designated Person and/or a Minister/Elder.
- v) At the interview, the Child Protection Policy will be provided and explained. All leaders must read the 'We Care 4 U Too' leaflet and access the Taking care Guidelines at <http://www.presbyterianireland.org/Resources/Categories/Safeguarding.aspx>
- vi) A letter of approval will be sent to the Designated Person from the Taking Care Office and should be stored securely on church premises.

3. Training. Leaders and helpers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults should attend Taking Care training not less frequently than every three years (as church policy or legislation

demands). Even those who have a good knowledge of child protection issues in another field should attend as Taking Care Training is the only training available that specifically deals with activities within a church environment.

4. Reporting of Concerns

The leaders in each of our organisations will be fully conversant with the reporting procedure where there is concern about the welfare of a child, as outlined in the Taking Care Guidelines. Leaders must not hesitate to report a concern about a child if they are at any time worried about their welfare

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, and copies will be held in the church in compliance with the Taking Care policy and GDPR requirements.

6. Designated Person

The Kirk Session has appointed a Designated Person (**Mr Keith Glasgow**) who will provide consultation, advice, training and support to organisations and to the Kirk Session on matters concerning the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Kirk Session will keep organisational leaders updated with the name of the Designated Person. 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.

7. Working Together

It is important that all leaders know the boundaries and rules of an organisation and that these are explained to children and parents. A code of conduct for children and young people will be drawn up at the commencement of the year's activities in each organisation. A code of conduct will help to create a safe, secure environment and an atmosphere where children will feel that they can relate to the leaders and helpers.

All leaders must abide by the discipline guidelines as set out in the Taking Care Guidelines.

8. Technology

Leaders should limit the direct internet communication they have with individual children, young people and vulnerable adults in the organisation of which they are leaders. All such communication with children, young people and vulnerable adults should, as far as possible, be within an open forum; in order to protect both participants and leaders. Leaders should be wise as to how they use this form of communication.

Leaders should not post photographs of participants from the organisation in which they are leaders, on a social networking site or anywhere on the internet, unless they have written parental consent. Leaders involved in Youth and Children's work should only have children's mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text children and if this is the case, contacting children through the use of mobile phones should be done in line with the KPC Youth Good Practice – Use of Mobile Phones, the Internet and technology in Children's and Young People Organisations and the Taking Care Guidelines.

9. Health and Safety

The Kirk Session expects organisations to adhere to the guidance on safety matters outlined in the Taking Care Guidelines. A Risk Assessment form should be completed for each organisation as well as for any outings or occasional events. Leaders will be informed of fire and first aid procedures.

10. Transport

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

11. Residential

Guidance on residential trips is provided in the Taking Care Guidelines and will be followed on all residential trips organised by KPC Youth.

12. Good Standards of Practice

Each organisation will be expected to comply with good standards of practice as outlined in the Taking Care Guidelines. This includes: physical contact, recommended ratios, transport, residential programmes and outing, church sleepovers, photographs and working with children and adults who have special needs.

13. Implementation and Review

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

14. Taking Care Guidelines

A copy of "Taking Care Two – Creating a Safe Environment for Children, Young People, Leaders and Staff" is available for study and reference in the Church Office and church library as well as on <http://www.presbyterianireland.org/Resources/Categories/Safeguarding.aspx>

15. Date of authorisation by Kirk Session

Date: 15 May 2006

13. Reviewed

Date: 17 January 2019