

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy

Children are valued , yet vulnerable , people in the Christian family , and need our special care. In the Gospels there are 3 important instructions given to us defining our relationship with children :

- **welcome** children (Luke 9:48)
 - **protect** children (Matthew 18:1-10)
 - allow children **free access to Jesus** (Mark 10:13-16)

These instructions are to be obeyed by all Christians in the life and ministry of the Church.

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church is committed to value , respect , nurture , protect and safeguard children and young people who are entrusted to its care. Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church has a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures to prevent the physical , sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people in its care. In order to achieve this we will ensure that staff and volunteers are carefully selected , screened , trained and supervised. Furthermore we will endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church will :

1. Ensure that all workers (paid and volunteers) understand their legal and moral obligations to protect children and young people from harm , abuse and exploitation.
 2. Develop best practice in relation to the recruitment of all workers (paid staff and volunteers).
 3. Ensure that the designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator understands his/her responsibilities to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies – **police and/or social work.**
 4. Provide opportunities for all newly appointed workers (paid and volunteers) through the provision of induction training , which gives an overview of the organisation's purpose , values , structure and services.
 5. Ensure that all workers (paid and volunteers) understand their responsibility to work to the standards and procedures detailed in the organisation's Code of Conduct and Child Protection procedures.
 6. Ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
 7. Provide opportunities for all workers (paid and volunteers) to develop their skills and knowledge in relation to the care and protection of children and young people.
 8. Ensure that all workers (paid and volunteers) understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about child/young person, or a workers conduct towards a child/young person , to the organisation's designated person for child protection.
 9. Ensure that the organisation meets all its responsibilities in adhering to the requirements of the **Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2007.**
 10. Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

Child Protection Procedures

Section 1 – Introduction

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church is committed to providing a safe environment for young people. This Child Protection Policy and Procedures reflects this commitment and aims to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children and young people are effectively managed

- 1 The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and deputies are responsible for developing and reviewing the organisation's Child Protection Policy statement. However, all workers (paid or volunteers) for Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church are required to implement the child protection procedures.

- 1 Section 5 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that 'it shall be the responsibility of a person who is 16 or over and who has care and control of a child under 16, to do what is reasonable to safeguard the child's health, development and welfare'. This places on Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church a *Duty of Care* for the children and young people we work with. Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church also recognizes that all children and young people have the right to freedom from abuse as outlined in the UN Convention of Rights of the Child. Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church will constantly strive to provide a safe environment, free from any forms of abuse, for all young people in its care. Refer to Appendix 2 for details on abuse.

- 1 Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church has a commitment to children's rights, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions which directly affect them.

Section 2 – Recruitment

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church recognizes that appropriate recruitment and selection procedures are an important part in developing and maintaining a safe environment for children and young people. The following procedures are in place to ensure that only suitable applicants are accepted as volunteers or staff of Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church.

- 2.1** All applicants (staff and volunteers) will be asked to complete an application form
- 2.2** All applicants (staff and volunteers) will be asked to complete a self declaration form.
- 2.3** All applicants (staff and volunteers) will be asked to provide suitable references.
- 2.4** All suitable applicants will be asked to attend an interview.
- 2.5** A self declaration form will be used so that interviewed applicants can declare and discuss convictions (and their context) with the organisation.

2.6 All successful applicants appointed into 'regulated work' positions (as defined in Schedule 2 of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Act 2007) will be required to be Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme members. Existing PVG Scheme members will be required to show their current PVG Scheme Record and agree to a PVG Scheme Record Update being carried out.

2.7 Any applicant found to be fully listed on the childrens' list will not be appointed to work (paid or unpaid) in a regulated work position.

Section 3 – Training

All newly appointed staff and volunteers at Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church will receive training , support , information and guidance to ensure that they understand their role and responsibilities with regard to Child Protection. This will include :

- 1 Details of the structure of the organisation will be provided , including details of overall responsibility for child protection within the organisation.
 - 2 Details of the organisation's aims and objectives will be provided.
 - 3 An assessment of staff (paid or unpaid) training and development requirements will be completed.
 - 4 The roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers within the organisation will be clarified.
 - 5 Clear details of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of all newly appointed staff and volunteer will be provided.
 - 6 All staff and volunteers must agree and sign up to the organisation's child protection policy and procedures.
 - 7 Training , information and a copy of the organisation's Code of Conduct will be provided.
 - 8 The contact details and roles and responsibilities of the organisation's Safeguarding Co-ordinator will be provided.

Section 4 – Responding to allegation or suspicion of Child Abuse

Members of staff (paid and unpaid) must report the suspicion, allegation or disclosure to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator (**John McNutt**). In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator the matter should be brought to the attention of one of the Depute Safeguarding Co-ordinators (**Gail Kirkwood / Marianne Robertson**). However, the first concern must be the reassurance of the child or young person and their protection from any potential risk. During the reporting process the child or young person should be protected from further contact with the individual involved in the allegation.

If the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to one of the Deputes. If the suspicions in any way implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputes, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Social Work Department.

Suspicious should not under any circumstances be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

As a worker (staff or volunteer) **your role is not to investigate or decide if abuse has taken place.** Your role is to recognise, record and report.

The following steps should be followed in response to suspicion or allegation of abuse :

1. Are you concerned about the safety of a child or young person ?

For example if :

- You see or suspect abuse
 - A child/young person has alleged that they are being abused
 - There are signs and indicators which could point to abuse / neglect
 - The organisation has received a third party report that a child/young person is being abused/neglected

2. Act Immediately

- Discuss your concerns with John McNutt, Safeguarding Co-ordinator, as soon as possible
 - Discuss nature of concerns ; Risks to the child/young person ; Actions and steps to be taken
 - Do not investigate** – Staff and volunteers should not attempt to investigate the situation or interview the child or young person regarding the situation
 - Confidentiality** – Details of suspicion, allegations or disclosures should only be passed on to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. If responding to an allegation from a young person you must not promise to keep the information they disclose confidential

3. Record Information

- Detailed written records should be made of all events and what the young person or other individuals have said (where this applies).
 - A form is supplied in Appendix 1 to help structure this.
 - Above and beyond the facts, any opinions or personal representations of the facts can be recorded but it should be clear they are opinions, rather than facts.
 - Records should be signed and stored in a secure place.

4. Refer To Appropriate Agency

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the Social Work Department and / or Police and ask to speak to the Duty Officer about a child protection issue.
 - Any further action should only be taken in line with advice given by Social Work Department.
 - The parents should not be informed by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The Social Work Department will decide how best to proceed.

Where an allegation is made against a Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church worker (paid or unpaid), the above process still applies. We will make a referral , in the form of a written report , to Disclosure Scotland if an individual harms a child/young person or puts a child/young person at risk of harm and as a result of this , we take the decision to remove them (or would have removed them had they not left of their own accord , come to the end of a contract , retire or have been made redundant).The form for referral to Disclosure Scotland is available on the Scottish Government website www.scotland.gov.uk

Section 5 – How to respond when a child / young person discloses abuse

It is likely that a child or young person who has been abused will have given much thought as to whether they should disclose the abuse. They will be nervous and afraid that they might be blamed , rejected or not believed.

It is not easy to give precise guidance , but the following may help :

General Points

- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
 - Remain calm and natural. You have been approached because the child trusts you.
 - You should only clarify what they are willing to tell you in their own words.
 - Look at the child directly.
 - Be honest.
 - Tell the child you need to let someone else know – **do not promise confidentiality.**
 - Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
 - Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all , then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Helpful things to say or show

- Explain / Describe to me

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says)
 - Thank you for telling me.
 - It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

Don't Say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
 - I can't believe it!
 - Are you sure this is true?
 - Why? How? When? Who? Where? i.e. No leading questions or investigation.
 - Never make false promises.
- Never make statements such as 'I am shocked , don't tell anyone else'.

Concluding

- Make clear notes as soon as possible after the disclosure writing down exactly what the child said and when s/he said it , what you said in reply . Record dates and times and keep notes in a safe place.
- Do not ask the child to repeat their "story" either to you or another person.
 - Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
 - Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens. Always finish on a positive.
 - Contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or depute who will contact Social Work Department and/or police.
 - Keep what you have heard or seen **confidential** between yourself, the child and the person to whom you have reported your concerns.
- Consider your own feelings and discuss any anxieties you have with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

Section 6 – Protection of Workers who report care and protection concerns

Deciding to report a colleague or volunteer you suspect of abusing or otherwise harming a child can be stressful and difficult and you may be worried about the person concerned taking action against you. The law does give you protection if you raise concerns or report a colleague as long as the report was not malicious or vexatious.

Section 7 – Data Protection and management of confidential information

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church is committed to the safe and secure management of confidential information. All personnel information, including volunteer information , is kept locked and can only be accessed by those who require it to carry out their role. Only relevant information is kept and this is regularly reviewed and outdated information destroyed appropriately.

Broughty Ferry Presbyterian Church is also committed to the rights of children and young people to confidentiality and this will be respected by all workers. However, where a worker feels that the

information disclosed by a child/young person should be referred to their line manager for investigation by an appropriate agency , the young person should be told that confidentiality cannot be kept.

Section 8 – Review of Child Protection policy and procedures

This policy and procedures document will be reviewed annually by John McNutt, Gail Kirkwood , and Marianne Robertson ; and all staff and volunteers will be notified of any changes.

This policy has been approved by:

On behalf of:

Signed:

Date: