

Child Protection Policy & Procedures 'Keeping Children Safe'

Iron Hall
Evangelical Church

January 2019

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Introduction	3
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	3
Children (NI) Order 1995.....	3
Child Protection Policy Statement.....	4
Code of Behaviour	5
General Principles	5
Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Leaders/Workers	5
Physical contact with children	6
Protecting children from harming themselves	6
Meeting with individual children for counselling/guidance	6
Personal relationships.....	6
Guidelines for the Supervision of children/young people	6
Supervision of children on journeys/outings/trips	7
In public with children.....	7
Guidelines on Bullying.....	8
Guidelines about Modern Technology	8
Guidelines on Special Needs	8
Expectations from Children and Young People	9
Sharing Information	10
... with children and young people.....	10
... with parents	10
... with workers.....	10
Manner of sharing information	10
Gaining Essential Confidential Information	10
Confidentiality Policy	11
Storage of Personal Data	11
Accident/Incident Reports	11
Procedures for Reporting Concerns.....	12
Designated Person	12
What is Child Abuse?.....	12

Checking concerns	13
Reporting procedure for Concerns	13
Reporting procedure for Disclosures	14
Some further help	14
Flowchart for Reporting Concern about a Child	15
Procedure for dealing with an Allegation against a Leader/worker	15
Allegations against the Designated Person.....	16
Appointment of Workers	17
Checks with Access NI	17
Supervision, Support and Training	18
Training	18
Supervision and Support of Workers	18
Principles of Good Practice	19
Ministry Guidelines	19
Transportation	19
Private cars.....	19
Mini-buses/ buses/ coaches	20
Children must be told their rights.....	20
Forms.....	21

Introduction

Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 an Evangelical Church 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church. 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

Children mattered to Jesus. Throughout His ministry He placed a very high value and dignity on them. He also acknowledged the vulnerable position of children and because of this expressed God's love and grace towards them.

As children mattered to Christ they must matter to His followers too.

"Keeping Children Safe" aims to help the Iron Hall youth organisations protect children from all forms of harm and to provide them with the highest possible quality of care.

Alongside our moral and spiritual obligations to keep children safe we also have a legal obligation when we accept children into our care to keep them safe.

"Keeping Children Safe" outlines the standards and practices of the Iron Hall. Workers are expected to read the booklet, to know the expected standards, and follow the recommended practices.

For the purpose of this Policy:-

'A Leader' is the worker appointed by the Elders with responsibility for a children/youth organisation.

'A Worker' is a person aged 18 years or over who is involved in leadership in a children's/youth organisation.

'A Child' is a person aged up to 18 years who attends any of the youth activities.

We in the Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church'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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church's Eldership and co-workers for the safety and benefit of the children.

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

The Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 & Never 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 Iron Hall 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 or unruly 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 physical disabilities is dependent upon the needs of the individual child – this also applies to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

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 a child; if necessity arises two adult workers should attend to any child.
- 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church, 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. Children should be discouraged from using their mobile phones during meetings.

Contacting primary school children up to 11 years old by whatever means should only be done through the parent. Contacting other children and young people by phone, text or email should not be undertaken without parental consent. Individual Workers should not normally make their mobile phone numbers or email addresses available to the children without parental consent.

The use of obscene images or language on mobile phones is not tolerated in the Iron Hall meetings or activities and will result in confiscation of the mobile phone and parents being informed. The Leader of any work should make the judgement on any of these issues and act accordingly.

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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church will take all steps to ensure that these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended internally.

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

Iron Hall Evangelical 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church. However in the case of children who require additional help we will work in partnership with the child, parents and any professionals to establish how the child can be included, this may not always be able to be addressed immediately.

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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church'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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church's Code of Behaviour and it should be available upon request for parents and Iron Hall 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 Iron Hall 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.
- 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 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.

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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 Iron Hall meetings or activities.
- Obtaining parental consent for all activities and for the taking of photographs.

Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of the Iron Hall 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church meetings and activities is to be in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

This essential personal information about children attending Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church to whom all concerns and disclosures should be brought. The Designated Person may be contacted at any time for advice/guidance.

The Designated Person may then discuss the concern/suspicion/allegation with Social Services (Gateway), 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 “Co-operating to Safeguard children and Young People” March 2016

Physical Abuse: is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Emotional Abuse: is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development.

Sexual Abuse: occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: is the failure to provide for a child’s basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse

Exploitation: is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

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

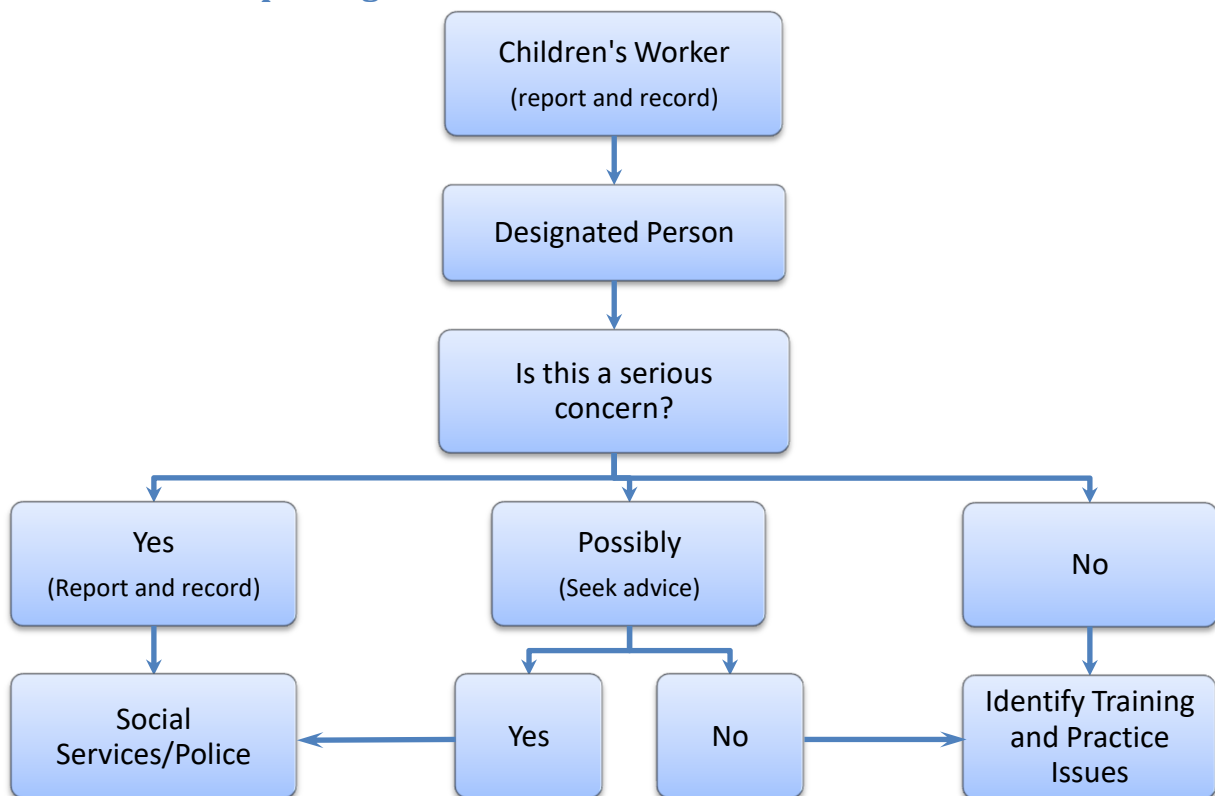
Don't inquire into details of abuse

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 a "**need-to-know**" basis. All concerns and disclosures need to remain as confidential as possible.
- The Leader of the Work you are part of and if you think appropriate the Designated Person.

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 Iron Hall's Elders.
- The Iron Hall's 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church 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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church Leadership dismiss a leader/worker as unsuitable to work with children, they should inform the Disclosure and Barring Service 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 Church should be informed. *The Record of Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse Form* should be **given directly to the Iron Hall's Leadership** as soon as possible. The Elders of Iron Hall Evangelical Church will deal with the allegation according to the procedure outlined above.

Appointment of Workers

The Iron Hall Evangelical Church Leadership are responsible for the appointment of all leaders and workers who work with children and young people in their various ministries. He/She hold the right to request references for persons previously unknown to Iron Hall Evangelical Church.

To help prevent unsuitable persons from working with children and young people in the Iron Hall Evangelical Church, 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 Leadership considers the person suitable, they ask the Designated Person to arrange for a disclosure check to be undertaken for the individual.
3. From January 2010 all new leaders/workers must have their disclosure check completed before commencing work among children and young people in the Iron Hall.

From January 2010 all new workers should complete an application form. It is good practice for the Designated person 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 regulated activity with children and vulnerable adults. In the Iron Hall Evangelical Church this applies to:

- Crèche Co-ordinator & Helpers
- Children's Church Co-ordinator & Teachers
- Sunday School Superintendant & Teachers
- Children's Meeting Leader & Workers
- Youth Fellowship Leaders & Committee
- Mother's & Toddler's Leader & Workers
- Summer Bible Club Workers
- Designated Person

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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church'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 Iron Hall Evangelical Church will be working closely with the CEF Safeguarding Co-ordinator for the training of their Leaders and Workers.

Supervision and Support of Workers

It is the Designated Persons 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 periodical visits to the Particular Work/Activity 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 all our ministries amongst children and young people:

The Leader in charge/Worker/Teacher 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 that particular meeting or activity, and what the children are to do in event of a fire.

The Teachers/Workers are expected to follow the Iron Hall Evangelical Church'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, never overcrowd a car, and avoid being alone with a child in a car. If a car is being driven by an 'R' driver parental consent for this person to transport others should be obtained and 'R' drivers should only be used in this way in times of absolute need.

Junior helpers (14-17 year olds) 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.

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.

- If a car is being driven by an 'R' driver parental consent for this person to transport others should be obtained and 'R' drivers should only be used in this way in times of absolute need.

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.
- Ensure that the person driving the minibus has the appropriate licence to do so and there is the necessary insurance.

Children must be told their rights

Children must be told of their rights, especially in relation to their involvement with the Iron Hall Evangelical Church. 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.
- We welcome children of all religions and none, 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 any Teacher or Worker 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.

Volunteer Reference Form to be completed by a person giving a reference for a new worker.

Record of Allegations of Abuse or Suspensions 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.