Child Protection Policy

Carryduff Presbyterian Church

Creating a safe environment for children, young people, leaders and staff.

Policy Statement

This policy statement is aimed at creating a safe environment where children and young people may enjoy social contact, personal and spiritual development and where they and the leaders and helpers working with them will be safe.

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

The Kirk Session of **Carryduff Presbyterian Church** has adopted The Presbyterian Church in Ireland's child protection guidelines, Taking Care, approved by the General Assembly and revised 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 the Kirk Session meetings.

1. Leadership

The Kirk Session believes that the recruitment and appointment process outlined in the Taking Care guidelines greatly assist the assessment of a person's suitability to work with children and young people. As a result of implementing such procedures, leaders and helpers within this congregation 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 who are 18 years and over.

i) All leaders will be required to complete an application form for leaders.

ii) The application form includes the vetting process according to legislation and good practice.

iii) The Kirk Session will appoint up to two interviewers to meet informally with the applicant. At the interview the child protection policy will be provided and explained. "We Care 4 U Too" will also be provided.

iv) Applicants will be required to provide two references by persons who are not relatives.

v) A letter of approval will be sent to the Designated Person from the Taking Care Office.

2. Training

Leaders and helpers who work with children and young people should attend Taking Care training on a regular basis as church policy or legislation demands and at least every 3 years. 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 is specifically dealing with church activities within a church environment.

3. 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.

4. The Designated Person

The Kirk Session has appointed the following Designated Persons:- Mrs Janet Avery, assisted by Mrs Heather Montgomery. The Designated Persons, will provide consultation, advice 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(s) 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.

5. Parental Consent Forms

Organisational leaders must ensure that they have home contact numbers, parental consent and medical information regarding the children in the organisations they are working with. Special consent forms will be issued for any 'off the premises' activity and residential programmes.

6. 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 outings, church sleepovers, photographs and working with children who have special needs.

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 create a safe, secure environment and an atmosphere where children feel they can relate to the leaders and helpers.

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

8. Technology

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

Leaders should not post photographs of young people 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 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 the fire and first aid procedures.

10. Implementation and Review

The Kirk Session is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, and will review it every three years.

Signed: Session)		(Minister)	(Clerk of
Rev Alis	tair S Smyth	Ian Montgomery	
Designated Person	S		Date:
	Mrs Janet Avery	Mrs Heather Montgomery	