

Christian Worker Code of Conduct

All helpers in every youth activity must subscribe to the enclosed requirements, and will be held to the strictest implementation of those requirements.

Victory Youth Camp
A Ministry of the
Bible Baptist Church
29 Westcourt Heights
Ballincollig, Cork
021-487-5142
www.biblebc.com

Victory Youth Camp Worker Code of Conduct

The Bible Baptist Church has developed this policy and these procedures to create a safe environment where both children, and adults are protected and supported.

Everyone in a Church or Church Programme has a duty of care towards children who attend Church meetings and activities to help to protect them from abuse. **The Bible Baptist Church** has developed a detailed policy and procedures to create a safe environment where both children, and adults are protected and supported. That policy is called ***The Child Protection Policies of the Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig***, referred to also as **CPP**.

The Bible Baptist Church is committed to the protection of children and vulnerable people through the provision of detailed policies and procedures, and welcomes their consideration by all religious organisations.

We hereby require every individual who is involved with children-related Church function to agree to abide by this short-form policy and these procedures for the duration of their involvement with our Church e.g. a short-term helper whose services are used while involved with our church, either paid or unpaid.

This document is a summary of the official Child Protection Policy (CPP) of the Bible Baptist Church which can be obtained upon request.

This document is divided into the following four sections:

- Principles of Protection and Reporting
- Child Protection Officers
- Self-Declaration Forms

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Principles of Protection

The welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting them from abuse. This Policy and these Procedures are based on the following principles:

- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse, and the responsibility of the Department of Social and Family Affairs and the Garda to conduct, where appropriate, a joint investigation.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately by the Church leaders.
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2003.

Reporting

Reporting to the Gardai and the Health Services Executive is mandatory when anything other than usual childhood upset is suspected. All Church staff and volunteer workers are hereby required to report any suspected abuse or abusive behaviours in association with Church activities.

If members have concerns about an incident involving a child or vulnerable adult that seems untoward or unusual they must report their concerns as soon as possible to the Child Protection Officer. Parents should also be informed of the incident as soon as possible unless it is not in the child's or vulnerable adult's interests to tell them (refer to CPP Section 8, Sharing Concerns with Parents, Guardians or Carers).

Report, record and inform if the following occur:

- If you accidentally hurt a child or vulnerable adult.
- If a child or vulnerable adult seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child or vulnerable adult misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If a child or vulnerable adult appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a child or vulnerable adult needs to be restrained.

First Aid and Treatment of Injuries:

If, in your capacity as a member of **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig**, a child or vulnerable adult requires first aid or any form of medical attention whilst in your care, then the following good practice must be followed:

- Where practicable all parents/guardians of children under 16 must complete a **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig Medical Consent Form** before participating in risk-designated activities (Bible Clubs, Youth Camps, etc.). Every Church Activity requires this form to be filled out by all parents/guardians before a child is permitted to participate.
- Be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Where possible, ensure access to medical advice and/or assistance is available.
- Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should respond to any injuries. In the event that no one with a recognised First Aid qualification is directly

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available, a designated adult will take full responsibility for the child or vulnerable adult until the injured person is brought to a qualified medical facility, an ambulance arrives, or a qualified person with First Aid training arrives. The Bible Baptist Church's Liability Insurance covers this situation adequately.

- Where possible, any course of action should be discussed with the child/vulnerable adult, in language that they understand and their permission sought before any action is taken.
- In more serious cases, assistance must be obtained from a medically qualified professional as soon as possible.
- The child's or vulnerable adult's parents/guardians or carers must be informed of any injury and any action taken as soon as possible, unless it is in the child's or vulnerable adult's interests and on professional advice not to do so.
- A **Notification of Accident Form** must be completed and signed and passed to the Church Secretary as soon as possible, and notification sent to the facility grounds that the Church Activity may be being held on.

Practice To Be Avoided

In the context of your role within **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig**, the following practice should be avoided:

- Avoid having 'favourites' from among the children/vulnerable adults - this could lead to resentment and jealousy by other children or vulnerable adults and could lead to false allegations.
- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or vulnerable adults away from the view of others.
- Ensure that when children or vulnerable adults are taken away from home, adults avoid entering their rooms unless in an emergency situation or in the interest of health and safety. If it is necessary to enter rooms, the door should remain open, if appropriate.
- Avoid taking children or vulnerable adults to your home unless it is a Church-wide designated activity that is regularly planned for and accepted by the Church.
- Avoid, where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children and vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.

Important Note:

It may sometimes be necessary for members to do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults, particularly if they are very young or vulnerable. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child or vulnerable adult and where possible their parents/guardians. It is important to respect young people's views. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible, particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child or vulnerable adult to carry out particular activities. Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Practices never to be sanctioned

In the context of your role within **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig**, the following practices should never be sanctioned:

- Never engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never engage in rough or physical contact except as permitted within the rules of the game or competition.

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- Never form intimate emotional or physical relationships with children or vulnerable adults.
- Never allow or engage in touching a child or vulnerable adult in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Never allow children or vulnerable adults to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Never reduce a child or vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control.
- Never allow allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Never share a room with a child or vulnerable adult for sleeping accommodation.
- Never invite or allow children or vulnerable adults to stay with you at your home.

Important Note:

In special cases sharing may be required for health and safety reasons or if the child is very young or particularly vulnerable and needs adult supervision. If so, explain why this is necessary to the child/vulnerable adult and their parent or guardian and seek their consent.

Child Protection Officers

A group of Child Protection Officers will be nominated and approved by the Church membership as qualified to protect and supervise children and vulnerable adults while visiting our Church meetings. A Child Protection Officer (CPO) has the main responsibility for managing child protection issues within Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig. The role and responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer are as follows: the monitoring of children while they are within the confines of the meeting place of the Bible Baptist Church so that they neither are alone at any time (without supervision by a qualified adult), and are under control (not running around and posing a danger to themselves or to others).

A Child Protection Officer is required to report all Child Protection related cases and concerns to the Pastor of the Bible Baptist Church, and each case will be reviewed speedily by the board of Elders (most often the same day as the reporting of the case or concern), and then brought to the attention of the parent(s) relevant to the case or concern. All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. Based upon the severity of the suspected abuse, the pastor and board of Elders will determine whether to inform the Garda and the Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department. If a case or concern of abuse is made while on rented properties, the relevant head of that property/organisation will be immediately contacted and informed of the concern, and his or her input sought.

A valid concern exists if there is the suspicion of any of the following: Emotional Abuse, Neglect, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Negative Discrimination (including racism), and Bullying (includes bullying by gangs; bullying by family members; physical bullying; verbal bullying; teasing; and harassment).

People who will be required to abide by these policies include: The Pastor, All Sunday School Teachers, All Crèche workers, and All Leaders and Helpers involved in Church-related activities

2.1 Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer has the main responsibility for managing child protection issues within **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig**. The role and responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer are detailed below. Specific responsibilities in relation to allegations against members are detailed in the Procedure for Managing Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse of a Child or Vulnerable Adult against Members (See Section 7.5 in the CPP).

2.2 Role and Responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer

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Within **the Youth Camp**, the Child Protection Officer will:

- Attend training on the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Implement and promote **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig's** Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Regularly report to the **Camp Director**.
- Act as the main contact within **the Youth Camp** for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Provide information and advice on the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Support and raise awareness of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Communicate with Church members and visitors on issues of child protection.
- Keep abreast of developments and understand the latest information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children and vulnerable adults. This will be channelled through the **Head Child Protection Officer**.
- Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- Establish and maintain contact with local statutory agencies including the Garda and Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department.
- Maintain confidential records of reported cases and action taken and liaise with the statutory agencies and ensure they have access to all necessary information.
- Organise training for members.
- Regularly monitor and review the **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig's** Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Characteristics of the Child Protection Officer:

- A Child Protection Officer must be a full member of the Church in good standing.
- Have an understanding of the issues affecting children and vulnerable adults and the sensitive way in which they must be managed.
- Be able to communicate with children and vulnerable adults.
- Be able to communicate the implications of protecting children and vulnerable adults to all members.
- Be supportive of the introduction of Child Protection Policy.
- Have an understanding and appreciation of the need to respect confidentiality.
- Be able to follow procedures and recognise when to seek advice and not rely solely on their own judgement.
- Be willing to challenge members who do not comply with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Actions for the Child Protection Officer when Concerns are Reported

Before taking any action, the Child Protection Officer must always seek advice from the Garda or Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department. Thereafter:

- **Establish Basic Facts** - the Child Protection Officer must initially clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a member may have abused a child and/or vulnerable adult.

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Important Note:

- This may necessitate the child(ren) or vulnerable adult(s) involved being asked some basic, open-ended, non-leading questions solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children, or other appropriate individuals (e.g. teachers, or activity leaders). After seeking advice from the Garda and/or Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department, the parents/guardians may be approached to provide consent to speak to a child/vulnerable adult.
- Advice must be sought from the Garda and/or Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department as to whether the member about whom the allegation has been made may be approached as part of the initial enquiry.
- This process will not form part of the disciplinary investigation.

Making a Referral in Cases of Suspected and/or Alleged Abuse – If the basic facts support a suspicion or allegation of abuse:

- The Child Protection Officer will refer the suspicion and/or allegation to the Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department and the Garda, as soon as possible that day.
- Appropriate steps may be required to ensure the safety of the child(ren) or vulnerable adult(s) who may be at risk.
- A record should be made on the **Incident Form** of the name and designation of the Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department member of staff or the Garda Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is required.
- Following advice from the Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department and/or Garda, the parent/guardian of the child or vulnerable adult should be contacted as soon as possible.

Important Note:

- Reporting of the matter to the Garda or Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department must not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. A form for Reporting Suspicions and/or Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of **Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig** must be completed as soon as possible that day. Where possible, a copy of this form must be sent to the Garda and Relevant department in the Health Services Executive (Southern Area) Department within 24 hours.

Possible Outcomes following advice from Garda

Where the initial enquiry reveals that there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a member has abused a child and/or vulnerable adult there will be an investigation. There are three types of investigation that can result:

- A disciplinary investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A criminal investigation

Following advice from the Garda, disciplinary action may be taken in cases where a criminal investigation is ongoing provided sufficient information is available to enable a decision to be made and doing so does not jeopardise the criminal investigation.

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Acceptance Signature and Self Declaration Forms

This page must be filled in and returned to the address at the bottom of this page.

Today's Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

I hereby accept the above terms and conditions concerning the Youth Worker Code of Conduct expectations.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Application Form and Self-Declaration Form (enclosed)

All applicants will be requested to complete an **Application Form**, and depending on their association with children and vulnerable adults, they will be required to also fill-in a **Self-Declaration Form**. The purpose of the application form is to obtain relevant details from the applicant for the position. The purpose of the self-declaration form is to collect information on criminal behaviour that may be relevant to the position e.g. criminal records or investigations. The self-declaration form is requested in a separate sealed envelope and is not opened until the applicant is selected for an interview. If the applicant is not selected the form is returned unopened to the applicant.

Please send this and all forms to the following post address:

Craig Ledbetter

Bible Baptist Church
29 Westcourt Heights
Ballincollig, Cork

If you have any questions concerning this or any of the requirements, contact:

Craig Ledbetter at 021-487-5142,
Paul Layton at 021-4679846,
or Eileen O'Keeffe at 437-7227.