



**POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR THE CARE AND PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND
LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ISSUED
20 SEPTEMBER 2009**

SWANWICK BIBLE WEEKENDS

POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR THE CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. INTRODUCTION

Swanwick Bible Weekends (“SBW”) is a registered unincorporated charity managed by Trustees and an Executive Committee (together “the Committee”).

The objectives of SBW are the “advancement of education in the study of the bible, and thereby the advancement of the Christadelphian faith”. This is met by “arranging bible study weekends for young people and families”.

The policy reflects SBW’s approach to the care, guidance and protection of children and young people, so that parents/ guardians can be assured of the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare of their children. It also acknowledges the responsibility the Committee has for the protection of children and young people as a consequence of the teaching of Christ, the Children Act 1989 and the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

2. CONTACT DETAILS

TRUSTEES:

Philip Lawrence (Secretary): 164 Edward Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5GF
(0115 981 9730)

Philip Brown: Farthings, Ullenhall, Henley-in-Arden, B95 5PB (01564 794 851)

Robin Basten: 30 West Street, Welford, Northampton, NN6 6HU (01858 575029)

CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATOR:

Coordinator: Steve Ellis: 20 Rangemore Close, Mickleover, Derby, DE3 9JU

STATUTORY AUTHORITIES:

Derbyshire Children’s Services Department: 01629 532 600

NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000

Police Child Protection Unit: 0345 123 33 33

OTHER BODIES

Christadelphian Support Network 0845 11 300 72

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Committee are committed to the care, guidance and protection of all children and young people attending SBW. SBW follows the scriptural principle that children and young people should be nurtured in the Lord, and taught of his ways, placing a high value on working with them to encourage them to learn of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Committee acknowledges that children and young people of any background can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. The Committee has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter referred to as 'The Policy') in order to ensure that children are protected. The Committee also recognises the need to have constructive links with statutory child protection agencies.

The Committee undertakes to file a copy of the Policy and practice guidelines and any amendments subsequently published on the website and with Derbyshire Social Services.

The Committee will arrange for all **Youth Leaders** to undergo voluntary application for Criminal Record Bureau Disclosures and, when available, to register with the Independent Safeguarding Authority ("ISA"). The **Child Protection Coordinator** will arrange this through the Christadelphian Sunday School Union ("CSSU").

4. DEFINITIONS

Youth Leaders includes:

- The Committee;
- Teachers who are responsible for teaching groups of young people for scriptural sessions during the day;
- Wardens, who are responsible for checking that children and young people are in their allocated rooms by a reasonable time at night, and a point of contact in case of emergency.

Other volunteers organizing activities with children, such as sport and walks, or those assisting teachers for occasional sessions, are not considered to be Youth Leaders as their contact with children is minimal and not prolonged over the weekend.

The **Child Protection Coordinator ("CPC")** is appointed by the Committee to act on its behalf in dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect, including as required, referring matters to the statutory authorities.

5. ROLES

The role of the **Child Protection Coordinator (“CPC”)** is to:

- Clarify and document in precise detail the allegations made or suspicions advised.
- Determine what action is required in conjunction with the Secretary (or in his absence another member of the Committee).
- Follow the principles of fellowship in Christ, but ensure the protection of the child or young person is paramount.

The action taken will depend on the degree of seriousness of the allegations/suspicions and the urgency of the circumstances. This **may** include contacting and passing information to the Police or Social Services. It is Social Services’ responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

The role of the **Secretary** and the **Committee** is to:

- Ensure a safe and caring environment, as detailed below.
- Support the **CPC** in his/her role, and accept that particular information that comes into his/her possession will be shared or disseminated on a ‘need to know’ basis only.
- Be familiar with the regulations and implications of child protection guidelines of the Children Act 1989 and the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Ensure that all **Youth Leaders** are provided with a copy of the Policy and given appropriate advice and support.
- In the event of an accusation of abuse of a child or young person, to receive information from, and support the injured party and the informant (child or adult) as best as possible. Where it is deemed necessary, to contact the appropriate child protection agency or police in accordance with the child protection guidelines.
- Meet and consult with other leaders to review these guidelines and policy, the running of SBW and its activities and undertake/review risk assessments where necessary.

6. A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT

A safe and caring environment at SBW for children and young people is crucial. To achieve this the Secretary shall ensure that:

- All Youth Leaders are carefully selected, inducted and supported. They are to be baptized Christadelphians and shall be known to the Committee.
- All Youth Leaders read and understand their responsibilities and implement where appropriate, the Policy and Guidelines for Youth Leaders.
- All attendees receive a copy of the rules.
- Adequate numbers of male and female Youth Leaders / wardens are on site during the day and night for safety and security reasons.
- Communication with Parents /Guardians is appropriate with details of SBW, planned activities, appropriate forms of consent, rules [and this Policy]. They should also be informed immediately of any serious accident/injury. See Guidelines for more information.
- Public liability and legal expenses insurance is current and reviewed for adequacy annually.
- Appropriate records are kept of all those attending SBW together with parents' / guardians' names, addresses and telephone numbers; with completed consent forms kept in a secure place at SBW; medical information that may be required in the event of an injury or sudden illness e.g. known allergies, medical conditions or special treatments; and details of all accidents and first aid treatment provided.
- A trained first aider is present at SBW and a suitably equipped first aid kit is kept on the site in an obvious place.
- No person under the age of 18 is responsible for caring or supervising other children.
- All leaders, children and young people are made aware of the dangers of fire, the evacuation procedures in the case of a fire are clearly displayed in each location of the Hayes.
- Information of a personal nature relating to a delegate is treated as confidential.
- Drivers used to collect/drop off children to the train station etc are, where possible, to be Youth Leaders.

7. RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

In the event that any form of abuse is suspected based on information from a child, young person or adult, the following procedures shall apply:

- The Youth Leader(s) concerned shall notify, without delay, the Secretary and CPC.
- The Secretary and CPC will clarify and document the allegations and raise these urgently with other Committee members. From the information available they will evaluate the potential level of risk to the child and the urgency of the situation and determine what action is required, including communications with parents, using this Policy
- If the child is at immediate risk and it is an emergency the Secretary and CPC will contact the Police.
- If it is likely that a criminal offence has been committed (the allegations concern sexual abuse or a serious physical injury), or there are concerns about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home, the Secretary and CPC will contact Social Services urgently for advice and/or the Police.
- If the allegations concern symptoms of neglect or emotional abuse, and there are concerns about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home, the Secretary and Child Protection Coordinator will contact the NSPCC (and in addition the CSN if necessary), urgently for advice.
- Where there does not appear to be a serious or immediate risk to the child, the Secretary and Child Protection Coordinator will take advice from the NSPCC (and in addition the CSN if necessary), and agree what action is to be taken.
- For lesser concerns, (eg concerns about the standard of parenting) the Secretary and CPC will offer support and advice and will encourage the parent/carer to seek help, but not if this might be thought to place the child at risk of injury.
- The Secretary and CPC shall record any information relevant to the matter, including the dates and times of the alleged events and where possible the actual words spoken by the child/young person/adult. A written record of concerns should be made. Additionally any Committee member involved should keep a detailed diary of events and conversations. The Secretary should then retain these records in a secure place.
- Notwithstanding the above, it is the right of any Committee Member to make a direct referral to Social Services or seek advice from NSPCC. However, the Committee trusts that its Members will follow the Child Protection procedures as set out in this document.
- If the allegations in any way involve the Secretary and / or Coordinator, then the report should not be made to or involve the individual(s) who are the subject(s) of the allegations.

- If it is thought possible that the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) have been involved they will not be informed of the alleged or suspected abuse. Where it is clear they have not been the Secretary will decide when the most appropriate time is to alert them, perhaps after consulting with child protection agency. The parent(s) or guardian (s) shall not be contacted where the child is of sufficient understanding to decide that s/he does not want them to be informed.
- No one shall interrogate the alleged victim and ask them leading questions.
- No one shall discuss any allegations with the alleged abuser.
- The Secretary will determine whether the conditions of SBW's Insurance Policy require that the insurers are informed, and if so will inform them immediately.
- No one shall promise to keep secrets but shall make it clear to the child/young person/adult that they have a responsibility to inform someone else about the matter.
- Youth Leaders shall, as far as is possible, offer continued support and friendship.
- Any allegation and information relating to any form of abuse will be a matter of confidentiality between the Youth Leader, Secretary, Committee members, CPC, the child protection agency and the police. Ecclesias shall not be contacted unless express permission is given.

8. REVIEW OF POLICY

The Committee will normally review this policy annually, each January, or additionally in the light of experience or changes in legislation.

Signed: Philip Lawrence

Secretary

Date: 20 September 2009

Signed:

Child Protection Officer

Date:

GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH LEADERS

Below is a checklist of responsibilities for all leaders. Please ensure that these responsibilities are followed so that there is a consistent approach at all times to caring for the needs of children and young people in our care.

1. CREATING A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT

A safe and caring environment for children and young people is crucial. As a Youth Leader, please ensure that:

- You have read and implemented where appropriate the requirements of the Policy and Guidelines for Youth Leaders.
- Suitable leader: children ratios are provided as follows for all activities to ensure adequate supervision and two leaders should be present at all times.

1 leader for every 6 children aged 5 to 7

1 leader for every 10-15 children aged 8 to 11

1 leader for every 15-20 children aged 12 and above

For information wardens are only responsible for children over the age of 12. Teachers are responsible for children up to the age of 15 only during the scripture sessions.

- You treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- You do not use any physical discipline at any time.
- You do not administer any prescribed medicines; this is the responsibility of parents' / guardians'.
- Details of all accidents and first aid treatment provided are recorded.
- Parents / guardians are informed immediately of any serious accident.
- No person under the age of 18 is given responsibility for caring or supervising other children.
- If you become aware of a child or young person smoking, consuming alcohol, taking drugs, illegal substances or solvents then to make them aware that such behaviour is not permitted at SBW and will result in their exclusion from SBW. You must also notify the **Secretary or Child Protection Officer**.
- You are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.
- You are aware of the procedures set out in the Policy to be followed in the event that any form of abuse is suspected.

- Information of a personal nature relating to a delegate is treated as confidential.
- You behave in a responsible manner at all times.
- You are aware of, comply with and uphold the SBW rules.
- You explain the importance of not taking the name of God and the Lord Jesus Christ in vain (blaspheming) and the reasons why we pray.

2. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS / GUARDIANS AND CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

Effective communication with parents / guardians of delegates is very important, even those who are brothers and sisters in Christ. The following types of communication should be used to keep parents / guardians thoroughly informed about what is happening at the SBW.

- An introductory letter about SBW, and a booking and consent form is provided in advance to parents / guardians for completion.
- A programme of SBW activities is provided to all parents/guardians, children and young people and is available at SBW.
- A letter is sent to parents / guardians prior to SBW detailing all the arrangements for the weekend, rules, contact telephone numbers and the daily programme.
- The letter should set out that SBW and the Youth Leaders are not responsible for children or young people until they arrive at SBW. Before then they are responsibility of their parents, including travel arrangements.

3. SBW RULES

Whilst at Swanwick please remember these simple rules:

1. You are to attend all activities and sessions on the programme. If for any reason you are not able to do so, please advise your teacher or warden.
2. Bedrooms and property are to be respected. Please report any damages.
3. Boys are not allowed in girls' bedrooms and girls are not allowed in boys' bedrooms at any time.
4. You may not swap or change rooms.
5. No one is to leave the conference site without permission.
6. Everyone is to be in his or her bedroom by the time stated in the programme.
7. Please do as asked by your teachers and warden at all times.
8. Smoking, the consumption of alcohol, drugs, illegal substances and solvents is not permitted at Swanwick.

Breaching any of these rules may lead to your exclusion, the matter being reported to your parents and any other action deemed appropriate.

4. DECISION TREE

