



Good Practice Guide



Good Practice Guide: Rugby Elim Church



Good Practice Guide

This Guide provides advice on good practice,
which is the main way that children and young people are protected

The advice found in this Guide should be followed as closely as possible

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Good Practice Guide for Workers (Paid and Voluntary)

This Guide is supplied as a standalone booklet so that all workers with children and young people own an individual copy.

Children and young people are best protected when the people who are working with them do not feel isolated. Rugby Elim will encourage all paid and voluntary workers to attend suitable training, which is available through CCPAS.

Section 1 – Code of Behaviour

All church workers (paid and voluntary) who wish to work with children and young people should:

- Treat all children and young people with dignity and respect, in attitude, language and actions
- Use age-appropriate language, and consider their tone of voice and body language
- Learn to control and discipline children and young people without physical punishment (using physical discipline and punishment is illegal for children and youth workers)
- Avoid, wherever possible, being left alone with a child or young person. When such a situation is necessary or inevitable, it is essential that the child and leader are visible to others (e.g. a door should be left open). Best practice would be to move to a space populated with other leaders
- Obtain additional adult help (if needed) in situations where a worker is alone with a child (e.g. small Sunday school classes)
- If known in advance, seek a parent's permission if a child or young person is to be seen on his or her own. Another adult must be nearby, and the child or young person must know this
- Only counsel or mentor children and young people of the same sex (i.e. male to male, female to female). Where this is not possible, then another adult (preferably of the same sex as the child or young person) shall be present during the interaction
- Ensure that when they need to see a child or young person off the church premises outside of normal activities, they always do so in a public place, as well as letting their team leader or Church Office staff know
- Consider how many workers should be involved with the group, and whether they have adequate male and/or female workers to safely run the group
- Respect (at all times) the privacy of children, avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments
- Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child to the toilet. The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have special needs
- Speak to parents of children under 2 years old who aren't toilet trained. The expectation is that a parent/guardian attends to them, rather than the worker

All church workers with children and young people should not:

- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child or young person, even in fun
- Touch a child or young person inappropriately or obtrusively
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Invade a child or young person's privacy whilst washing or toileting
- Entertain excessive attention seeking from a child or young person towards themselves, that is overtly physical or sexual in nature
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person
- Show favouritism to any one child or young person, or certain group of children or young people
- Allow unknown adults access to children (visitors should always be accompanied by a known person)
- Allow unknown adults to give children or young people lifts
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own. If this is unavoidable, ask the child or young person to sit in the back of the vehicle
- Invite a child or young person to their home, and certainly not alone
- Leave a child alone outside the church without adult supervision. Always ensure a known person will collect the child

Section 2 – Appropriate Touch

Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature. In specific reference to types of physical contact, it is important that the conduct of workers is not misconstrued as abuse.

One of the aims of Rugby Elim’s Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guide is to ensure church groups provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and young people, whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. All workers must work with (or within sight of) another adult.

The following guidelines should be adhered to in regard to physical touch:

- Keep everything public, and avoid being on your own with a child of any age. A hug in the context of a group is very different to a hug behind closed doors
- Avoid unnecessary informal touching. Consciously avoid touching the child in areas of the body that would be covered by a swimming costume. Touching the leg above the knee is also generally not acceptable
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's need. If you believe a child may have been abused, it is important to avoid any physical contact until they learn the difference between ‘good’ touching and ‘bad’ touching
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker. Avoid face-to face hugging. Instead of a face-to face hug, try an arm on the shoulder ‘sideways hug’. This satisfies the child or young person’s need for closeness whilst avoiding inappropriate physical contact
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child
- Children or young person may sometimes need comforting. In such situations, make sure they are responded to warmly but with other adults around
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention
- First Aid should be administered with others around. When giving First Aid (or applying sun cream, etc), encourage the child to do that which they can manage themselves, but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary
- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming themselves or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported to the Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator

Section 3 – Inappropriate Behaviour by Children or Young People towards Adults

Children or young people can sometimes make suggestive approaches to an adult. They may have a “crush,” and attraction, or may act inappropriately following previous abusive experiences.

This behaviour may also be a “cry for help”.

If an adult feels uncomfortable about a child or young person’s behaviour, he or she must:

- Make it clear to the child or young person, with sensitivity, that their language or behaviour is inappropriate
- Tell another team member. Agree what measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence
- Record the incident in case accusations are made in the future. Sign and date the record and hand it to the Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator

Section 4 – Recommended Staffing Levels

The minimum required staffing levels (according to OFSTED) for children’s groups are given below. More help may be required if children are being taken out or undertaking physical activities.

0-2 years	1 person for every 3 children (1:3)
2-3 years	1 person for every 4 children (1:4)
3-8 years	1 person for every 8 children (1:8)
Over 8 years	1 person for the first 8 children, and then one extra person for every extra 10 children (1:8, + 1:10)

Each group should have at least 2 adults, and it is recommended that wherever possible a gender balance be maintained. If groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with doors open, one person per group is permissible.

No person under 16 years of age should be left in charge of any children of any age, nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at anytime. They should not be counted as a ‘worker’ when considering staff/child ratios.

Each group that is run for (or involves) children and/or young people must use some form of registration process to ensure there is a safe and secure record kept of attendance. It would also be best practice to ensure that leaders are appropriately identifiable, preferably with badges, lanyards or group uniform (i.e. T-shirts or polo shirts).

Adults asked to help on a very occasional basis may be seen as visitors, but must be accountable to an appointed worker. If they become part of a regular rota, they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process and undergo a DBS check.

Section 5 – First Aid Box

There are a number of First Aid boxes around Rugby Elim. The primary First Aid box is located in Oxley's Kitchen.

- In the case of an accident or injury, only basic details should be entered into the record book (the red accident folder), which is located in the First Aid box
- Only details such as the name of the person who is injured or who had the accident, the person administering first aid, and the nature of the injury etc. should be documented. The children or youth lead worker should then sign the slips, and subsequently the parent or guardian. One slip is to be retained and the other is to be given to the parent or guardian of the injured child
- Under no circumstance should any other personal information be recorded in this book
- At the earliest opportunity, the main accident book (which is located in the church office filing cabinet) needs to be completed, and **all** sections are to be answered and signed by the person who administered first aid. This can be done for them by a representative
- Should further action be required i.e. should a child need to be admitted into hospital, then the person responsible for health & safety is to be notified and take the relevant action required. If there is no further action, the report can be filed away in a locked cabinet (as per the Data Protection Act)

5.1 HIV/AIDS

Since workers may not know that a child may have HIV or AIDS, it is good practice always to take the necessary precautions. Good hygiene should always be practiced.

Disposable latex gloves and a disposable apron should always be use when dealing with broken skin, body fluids and faeces.

Confidentiality regarding a child's HIV status should always be maintained.

Section 6 – Transporting Children and Young People

These guidelines should apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children and young people, organised by or on behalf of Rugby Elim. They do not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between parties with parental responsibility.

The advice on transporting children and young people is as follows:

- Only those who have gone through Rugby Elim’s recruitment procedures for workers should transport children
- All drivers must have read Rugby Elim’s Safeguarding Policy, and agree to abide by it
- Parental consent must be given, and all journeys should be carried out with the knowledge of the leadership of Rugby Elim
- The driver must hold a full driving licence, have adequate insurance and the vehicle must be road worthy
- Having checked drivers, (application form, interview, references etc) it is reasonable to expect that they may be alone with a child for short periods e.g. dropping off the last child. Consideration could be given to dropping off the least vulnerable child last and plan routes accordingly
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in a car with a child. If a child wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other children have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it isn’t convenient to talk there and then, but arrange to meet the child or young person at a location where there are other adults around
- When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle, it is good practice to insist children stay in the same groups on the outgoing and return journey. This will avoid the confusion over whether a child has been transported home or, at worst, left behind
- If travelling in convoy with cars and minibuses, please note that the maximum speed for a minibus is 50 mph on single carriageway roads, 60 mph on dual carriageways, and 70 mph on motorways
- At collection or drop-off points, do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by one of their designated adults
- It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular child e.g. where there has been a disagreement, or where a child or young person has any variety of former history with the driver
- If parents are transporting their children (e.g. to and from activities), ensure that all are made aware that such arrangements are the responsibility of the parents involved and not the church or organisation
- CCPAS recommends that when using minibuses for transporting children, seatbelts should be fitted for all passengers. This is compulsory for vehicles registered on or after 1/10/01

Regulations governing the use of child restraints came into force on 18th September 2006. From that date, all children carried as passengers in cars are subject to the following rules:

- Children under three years of age must have the correct child restraint (exceptions include taxis and private hire vehicles)

- All children between the ages of three and before they have reached twelve years of age, unless the child is over 135cm in height, must use the correct child restraint (exceptions include where a child travels in a taxi, or private hire vehicle, over a short distance in an unexpected necessity, or where two child restraints are already fitted preventing a third from being fitted)
- Children over 135cm in height or aged 12 or 13 must wear adult seat belts if fitted
- Passengers over 14 years of age must wear adult seat belts where fitted (it is the passengers responsibility and not the drivers for ensuring this)
- An additional consent form (which is distributed before any outing that includes vehicular transportation) should be signed by parents and guardians to explicitly permit the transportation of their child by a qualifying worker of Rugby Elim

Section 7 – Praying with Children and Young People

These guidelines are for workers to adhere to when praying with children and young people, and to set boundaries for children and young people when praying with or for each other. Praying for children and young people involves offering acceptance, respect, non-judgemental listening, sensitive responses, discernment and patience.

If there is a general invitation for people to come forward for prayer in a family service, then it may be helpful to ensure that there are children and youth leaders available to pray for the children and young people if necessary. This is better practice than solely relying on leaders who are used to praying for adults.

- Ask the child what they are requesting prayer for
- Speak quietly and calmly, never shout or raise your voice
- Don't laugh or dismiss out of hand if they are praying for something you consider trite or irrelevant (e.g. my cat's poorly)
- If they do not have specific needs or requests then simply ask God to bless them
- Be aware that a child may want prayer for a specific reason, which can offer an insight into underlying situations (e.g. following a sermon on David and Goliath, children and young people may want prayer for the intimidating giants in their lives. This could be an indicator of bullying or abuse)
- Those praying with children and young people should always be alert to any child protection issues and not forget about or delay doing anything about child protection because they are praying
- If you have prayed for a specific issue, it may be helpful to write it down after praying and give it to the child so that they can let their parents know and remember it themselves
- Explain all your actions to a child or young person. Bear in mind that they may be uncomfortable with the use of anointing oil. Also remember that a child or young person may not understand the use of the spiritual gift of 'tongues'. Therefore refrain from any action which may cause confusion or distress
- If a child or young person becomes distressed, cease to pray. Act calmly and talk with them to ascertain what has caused the distress. Talk to another leader if appropriate before continuing to pray. Consider with whom the child might feel more comfortable. Are there any gender issues? If unsure, cease praying and talk to the child's parent(s) later

7.1 Seeking Permission

- Ensure that parents are aware that you are praying for their child and that prayer is part of your service/programme (In some cases parents will not be present so you will be unable to obtain consent)
- Always seek the child's permission to be specifically prayed for

7.2 Environment

- Always pray in an open area with other children and leaders around
- Consider your height in relation to the child/young person

- Get down on their level - don't tower over them. It can be good to sit down with the child
- Don't crowd the child or young person

7.3 Touch

- Avoid placing your hands on the child or young person's head as they may find this overpowering
- Seek permission before holding a child/young person's hand
- Take care when using oil or any other material. Use only on the forehead with the child/parents' agreement

7.4 Confidentiality

- Never promise total confidentiality should a child or young person wish to disclose to you a situation within a prayer ministry context. You must give them clear boundaries, as you may need to refer a matter to a GP or Statutory Authorities

7.5 “Deliverance Ministry”

- Never allow a leader or child or young person to engage in any activity that may be regarded as “deliverance ministry” - it is inappropriate in the context of children’s activities and youth groups

7.6 Language

- Use clear, easily understandable language
- Reflect back what the child has said to you, to show you have understood their prayer request. If a child says they are feeling tired, you could reply, "Let us pray for you as you are feeling tired," rather than, "I understand that you are depressed, so let’s pray about that"
- Keep language simple and short when praying, and generally keep prayers short. This will help the child or young person's understanding and engagement

7.7 Giving Advice

- Avoid giving advice to children or young people about specific problems involving decisions. A child or young person may be in a very distressed state and could be very susceptible to suggestion
- Be careful how you advise them if you believe you have heard from God about their situation. It is better to hold that in your spirit, asking God to help you deal wisely with the issue without specifically framing it prophetically, or even mentioning it at all
- Never advise a child or young person to stop taking medication or cease seeing professionals involved in their care or welfare

Section 8 – Workers Communicating with Children and Young People

All children and young people need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to email, social media, messenger services and mobile phone usage.

It is important to remember that as well as parents and guardians, children and young people have a right to decide whether they want a church worker to have their email address or mobile telephone number, and shouldn't be pressurised into divulging information they would rather keep to themselves.

Workers should not show favouritism to children and young people in relation to communication technologies e.g. communicating less with those who don't have a computer or mobile phone, offering to pay for a child's top-up card, engaging in private communications on social media, etc.

8.1 Email

Email is a useful tool often used by workers to remind children and young people about events and meetings (e.g. times, dates, themes etc). If email is being used workers should consider the following:

- Ensure messages are in the public domain by including a third party recipient. This method of accountability should provide workers a deterrent from sending bullying, insulting or abusive emails
- It is important workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, and although it should be obvious when an email is ending, workers should never use inappropriate terms such as "lots of love" to conclude a message
- Children and young people can find it easier to communicate via email because nobody is physically present. Workers therefore need to be careful when using such platforms of communication

8.2 Communication via Social Media, including E-Safety

Under Section 7 (p15-17) of Rugby Elim's Safeguarding Policy, there is a comprehensive guide to safe and appropriate electronic communication with children and young people (via social media and when using smart devices) entitled E-Safety Policy.

Within it there are many robust and practical guidelines for those working with children and young people that directly relate to electronic and internet-based communications.

Rugby Elim considers their E-Safety Policy extremely important and of particular relevance – as social media and ever-developing technologies for communication progress and advance rapidly.

For the sake of unnecessary duplication, this E-Safety Policy will not be re-written here, but we strongly encourage you to re-read Section 7 of the Safeguarding Policy as you go through this Good Practice Guide.

8.3 Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are one of the most popular ways of communication. They can be used anywhere, at any time and are far more difficult to monitor. Therefore, particular diligence needs to be applied when workers use mobile phones to communicate with children and young people.

- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations and/or texts. Alternatively, the church could consider supplying the worker with a phone and obtain itemised phone bills
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on to the worker's supervisor. If they are of serious concern, or implicate the worker's supervisor, they should go directly to the Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator
- Workers should use clear language, particularly when texting. They should not use suggestive or ambiguous words or abbreviations, such as 'love,' or abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'
- Most mobile phones have digital cameras. Workers should ensure that they only take photographs of children and young people in accordance with Rugby Elim's guide to making and publishing images (Section 11 of the Good Practice Guide). Workers should not keep images of children or young people on their mobile phone. Images should be downloaded to the church computer and kept securely
- Use their personal mobile phone during regulated activity, and where possible to leave their phone in a secure location

Section 9 – Overseas Missions' Procedures

When children and youth take part in a short-term international mission, where possible the fullness of Rugby Elim's Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guide will provide a framework of interaction and for ministry.

However, it is worth specifically articulating the following procedures that differ, or will be enhanced in an Overseas Missions' context:

- All young people attending an overseas missions' trip will remain under the protection of Rugby Elim, but with additional and direct support and governance by Elim's International Missions' Department
- Every eligible minor will have to complete the DBS application process in order to engage in overseas mission when ministering to children and vulnerable adults. For those too young to go through the DBS process, they will be required to acknowledge in writing their understanding of the Church's Policy and Good Practice Guide
- Any overseas mission trip that comes under the leadership and guidance of Rugby Elim Church will be guided by the Church's Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guide, specifically in relation to e-safety, prayer ministry the publication of images
- For certain situations in an international context, where Rugby Elim Church's Policy will be harder to comply with, for example the often more relaxed approach to transportation in foreign countries, the missions' team leaders will do their best to ensure that the Policy and Good Practice Guide are complied with as fully as possible, but with primacy on child safety where Policy and practice conflict

Section 10 – Crèche Procedures

The aim of Crèche is to provide a safe and caring environment for toddlers and young children to experience and learn about the love of God. A mixture of play, stories, songs and prayer achieves this.

Week by week and month by month, leaders and helpers should develop relationships with the children. This is done primarily by the consistent and repeated teaching the foundations of the Christian faith through stories and songs.

By the time the children leave Crèche (at the beginning of the term after they turn 3), they should have a basic grasp of elements of our faith (e.g. Jesus loves them and God made them).

10.1 Usual Crèche Programme

- Crèche starts at 10:30am, and children should be collected from Crèche promptly at the end of the service
- Crèche is for children aged between 6/9 months and up to the beginning of the term after their 3rd birthday
- Children must be signed in and out of Crèche using the register provided (**in pen not pencil**)
- Leaders and helpers must also sign the register (**in pen not pencil**)
- There is an information sheet in the Crèche folder, listing any information relating to children who regularly attend Crèche (e.g. what they are allowed to eat and drink, as well as any allergies). **This must be read and referred to, so that everyone is aware of any special requirements**
- The children usually have 30 minutes of free play, followed by a story. There should also be a craft activity (normally a colouring sheet), prayer, drinks and a biscuit
- Crèche usually finishes with a time of singing, and if time allows, some more free play

Stories

- Please do a Bible story of your choice, or follow the Year Outline

Songs

- Use the CD player provided. CD's can be found in the box

Drinks & biscuits

- These are in the crèche cupboard in the kitchen
- **Please ensure that cups are washed and put away after use**

Nappy changing

- If a child needs changing, please notify the parent

10.2 Responsibility of the Crèche Organisers

The responsibilities of the Crèche Organiser can be found on the shared Dropbox folder, which can be accessed by speaking with Lisa Whitley.

Crèche Organisers are responsible for the following:

- There must be a minimum of one female helper on the rota per session, and there has to be a minimum of 3 adults per session
- Appointing new leaders and helpers, explaining their role and ensuring that leaders are running Crèche as outlined
- Forwarding new worker's names to the Safeguarding Coordinator (Rev. Sam Banfield) for a Enhanced Disclosure Check (DBS) **prior** to appointment
- Planning and distributing the Crèche rota and Crèche procedures to leaders and helpers
- Providing resources for the leaders to achieve the aims of Crèche
- Managing registration forms and weekly register sheets (return to Church Office on a regular basis)

10.3 Responsibility of the Session Leader

The responsibilities of the Session Leader can be found on the shared Dropbox folder, which can be accessed by speaking with Lisa Whitley.

Session Leaders are responsible for the following:

- Reading, agreeing and being familiar with Rugby Elim's Safeguarding Policy & Good Practice Guide
- Ensuring that the room is set up prior to 10:00am
- Ensuring children are correctly registered (i.e. signed in and out by parents and guardians)
- Ensuring leaders' and helpers' names are written on the register
- Ensuring that parents of any new child fill in a registration form, even visitors
- Knowing the location of the First Aid box (Oxley's kitchen) and accident slips (red folder in drawer in Oxley's kitchen)
- Taking the decision to text a parent if child needs changing, or is too upset to stay in crèche
- Ensuring register is locked away at the end of the session
- Ensuring toys are put away and room is left clean and tidy, and that cups are washed and put away
- If you cannot fulfil your date on the Crèche rota, it is your responsibility to swap with someone else and write the alteration on the rota on the back of the Crèche door (please ensure that if you do swap with someone else, that there will still be at least one female during that session)

10.4 Responsibility of Crèche Helpers

The responsibilities of the Crèche Helper can be found on the shared Dropbox folder, which can be accessed by speaking with Lisa Whitley.

Crèche Helpers are responsible for the following:

- Reading, agreeing and being familiar with Rugby Elim's Safeguarding Policy & Good Practice Guide
- Helping set up the Crèche room
- Assisting the leader with planned activities
- Paying with and caring for the children
- Escorting children to the toilet (**please see separate toileting policy at the end of this section**)
- If you cannot fulfil your date on the Crèche rota, it is your responsibility to swap with someone else, write the alteration on the rota on the back of the Crèche door and inform the Crèche leader for that day (please ensure that if you do swap with someone else, that there will still be at least one female during that session)

10.5 Toileting Procedure

Male and female leaders and helpers can take children to the toilet, but please be aware of the following:

- Male leaders and helpers may take boys to the male toilet, as well as taking girls (but taking girls is not best practice, unless they are taking their own daughter to the toilet)
- Female leaders and helpers may take girls to the female toilet, as well as taking boys (but taking boys is not best practice, unless they are taking their own son to the toilet)
- If you are taking children to the male or female toilets, please ensure that there are no other males in the male toilet (and females in the female toilet) prior to the children going into the cubicle
- If taking children to the toilets, please ensure that you notify any other Sunday group in Oxley's that you are taking children into the relevant toilet
- Let the children go into the toilet, but leave the main toilet door open
- Stay in Oxley's whilst the children are going to the toilet

For those under 2 years old, and who haven't been toilet trained, the Session Leader will use the mobile phone number provided by the parent or guardian to text them and ask them to come through to Crèche to change their child.

Section 11 – Making and Publishing Images of Children and Young People

Making and publishing images of children and young people is an activity usually enjoyed by children and parents, and can bring useful publicity for the church and relevant ministries.

However, there are some important issues to note, which are the same for still photographs, digital images or video (regardless of the particular technology used). For sake of brevity, this guide uses the collective term “images” for all types of visual recording listed above.

Images count as personal data under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Therefore, good practice is as follows:

- Obtain consent from parents and children before publishing images. Consent is not required in writing if the images aren't being publicised in any way. However, if they are going to be publicised locally, in a geographical region or electronically, specific consent must be obtained
- If the event is an open event, such as a church service, nativity play (or something similar), then a verbal notice can be given out at the beginning by the leader of the service or event, asking that any parent or guardian who objects to images being made of their child should remove the child from view of the camera or approach the leader afterwards and ensure any images they object to are not used
- Where possible each child should be part of a group
- If the photograph is to be published, avoid naming the child. If a name needs to be used, it should only be a first name
- Be clear about whether the image is to be retained for further use
- Store the image securely and dispose of it when it is no longer required

Section 12 – Responding to a Child or Young Person wanting to talk about Abuse

Over time, church workers may get to know the children and young people in their groups very well. A child or young person may feel like they can trust a leader or worker enough to be able to talk about unpleasant situations in their life (at home, at school or at church). This is both a privilege and a responsibility.

If a child asks to talk in confidence, always tell them that will depend on the circumstances discussed. It will be necessary to get the right people and authorities involved if they are being harmed.

12.1 General Points

When responding to a child or young person, a list of good practices below can be followed:

- Listen to the child attentively
- Maintain eye contact
- Allow the child to talk but don't press 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
- Tell the child they are not to blame for anything that has happened
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told so that the abuse can stop – don't promise confidentiality
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way that the child can understand
- **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
- You might have to consider referring to Children's Social Care or the Police to prevent a child or young person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse
- Contact the person(s) in Rugby Elim responsible for co-ordinating child protection concerns before contacting agencies such as CCPAS for advice
- **Make notes as soon as possible, preferably within one hour of the child talking to you. Don't do this whilst they are talking to you**
- Ensure you include in your notes the following: the child's name, address and date of birth, details of other children in the family home, whether the child and parents are aware of the referral, reasons (why, when and what) for the referral, the type of abuse being reported and any action taken
- Write down exactly what the child said and when she/he said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity)
- Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed
- Records should be kept securely for an indefinite period, after being handed to the Church Office

Section 13 – Guidelines for Discipline

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life and is an expression of God's love for an individual. (Hebrews 12:5-12 & Proverbs 22:6)

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the children and young people in your care
- Work on each individual child and young person's positives, and do not compare a child with another. Rather, encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks
- Build healthy relationships with children and young people and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect them to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself
- Take care to give quieter and well-behaved children and young people attention, and resist allowing demanding children and young people to take all your time and energy
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said. This avoids manipulation
- If children and young people are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly
- **Never** smack or hit a child or young person, and don't shout. Change the tone of your voice if necessary
- Discipline out of love, never out of anger (Call on support from other leaders if you feel too angry to respond well)
- Lay down ground rules (e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property), and make sure the children and young people understand what action will be taken if not kept
- Every child and young person is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows therefore, each person should be dealt with on an individual basis
- Some children and young people have a tendency to be disruptive in a group. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort
- Have a disruptive child or young person sit right in front of you, or get a helper to sit next to them
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active, rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation
- Take a disruptive child or young person to one side and engage with them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging their strengths
- Remedial action can be taken against a constantly disruptive child or young person. They can be warned that you may speak to their parents or guardians about their behaviour, they may be sent outside the room (under supervision), back into the church service or, after consultation with a church leader and advising the parent or guardian, be banned from attending the group for a period of time
- If a child or young person's behaviour continues to be disruptive despite measures taken above, seek advice and guidance from a leader
- Pray with the other workers before the session and take time to debrief before you leave

Section 14 – Record Management

A register of children or young people attending a club or activity should be maintained, together with a register of helpers. This should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if the child is not attending the whole session.

Make a note of other people in the building (e.g. maintenance person, visiting speaker etc) and any other events taking place at the same time.

Consider introducing a logbook system for all activities involving children and young people. Workers should write down unusual events or conversations, recording what they witnessed. This may be very helpful, for example, if leaders have to deal with a difficult child who subsequently makes an accusation of assault.

A young person who repeatedly makes throwaway sexual comments about workers may, at a later date, make an allegation of abuse. In this situation, records of previous examples of this behaviour would enable any allegations to be seen in context. Patterns of behaviour or concerns might also emerge from log records that might not otherwise be so obvious. For example, bruising noted on a regular basis or a number of young people making similar comments about one worker that raises concerns. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights and the action taken. Log books can protect both children and workers.

All children and youth groups must maintain an up to date record of each child with name, address, contact telephone number and an emergency number. They must keep a record of all relevant medical information for each child, and obtain a signed consent form from parents who have children joining the group.

Finally, every group must keep registers, which include the names of leaders and volunteers and their contact telephone numbers.